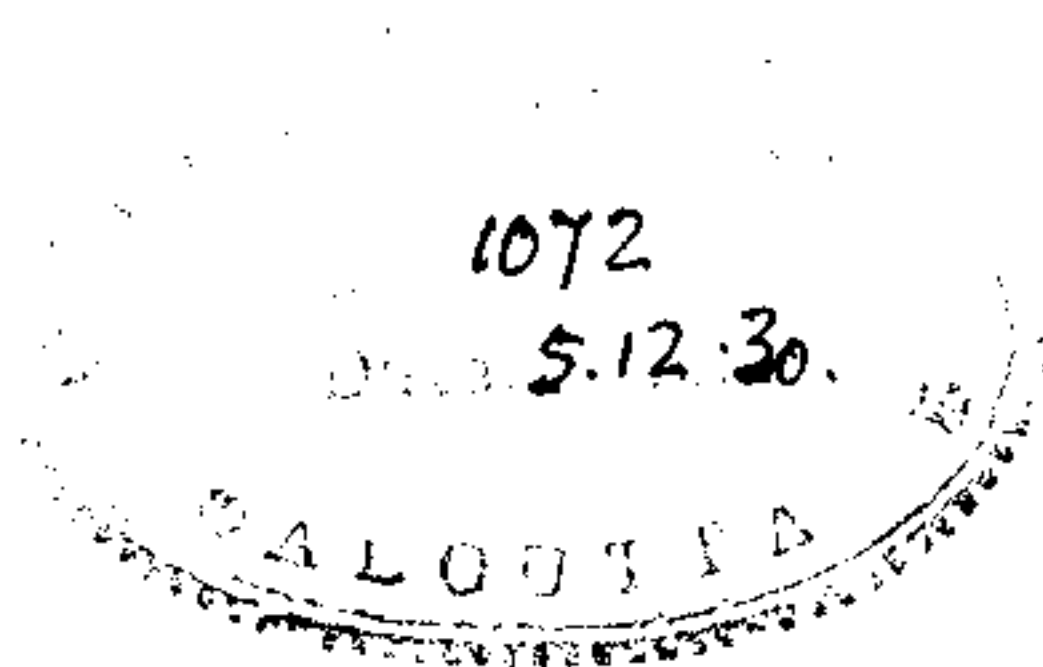


SELECT DOCUMENTS
ILLUSTRATING THE
FOUR VOYAGES OF
COLUMBUS

INCLUDING THOSE CONTAINED IN R. H. MAJOR'S
*SELECT LETTERS OF CHRISTOPHER
COLUMBUS*

TRANSLATED AND EDITED
WITH ADDITIONAL MATERIAL, AN
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY
CECIL JANE

VOL. I
THE FIRST AND
SECOND VOYAGES



LONDON
PRINTED FOR THE HAKLUYT SOCIETY
MCMXXX

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I

PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTION	
The Objective of Columbus	xiii
Notes on the Documents	cxxiii
LIST OF WORKS CITED	cli

DOCUMENTS

FIRST VOYAGE

Letter of Columbus	2
------------------------------	---

SECOND VOYAGE

1. Letter of Dr. Chanca, written to the City of Seville .	20
2. Memorandum of Christopher Columbus, sent to Ferdinand and Isabella by Antonio de Torres .	74
3. Andrés Bernáldez, History of the Catholic Sovereigns Don Ferdinand and Doña Isabella, Chapters 123-31 .	114

INDEX	169
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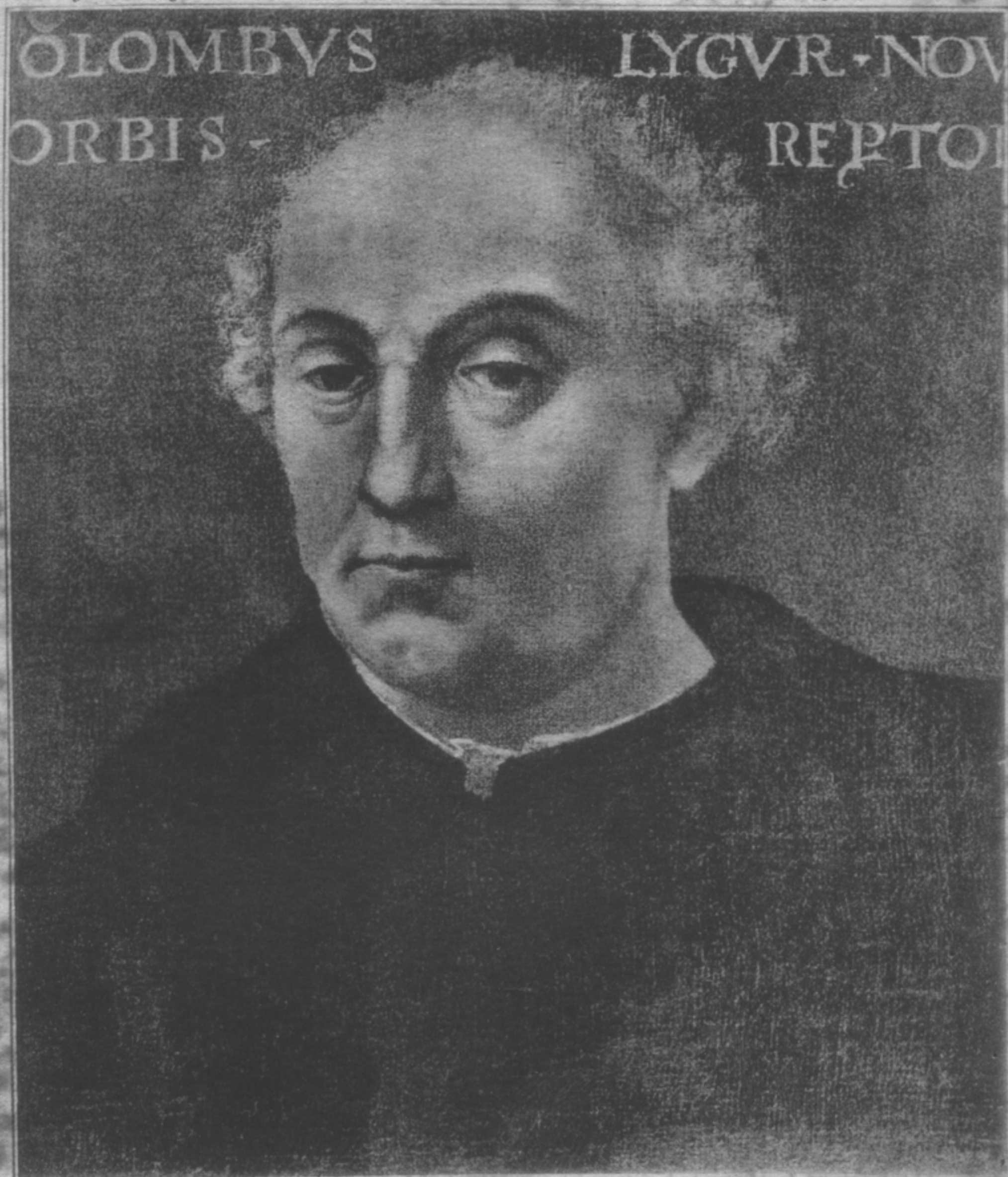
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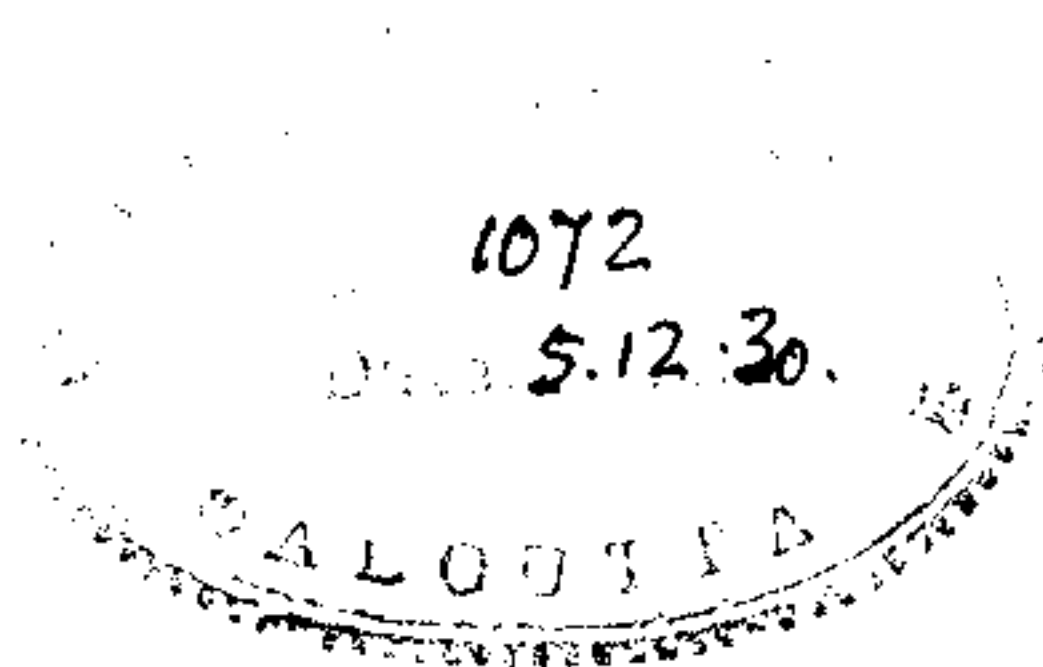
*(Reputed to be the original once in the
Jovian Gallery at Como.)*

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PREFACE

IN 1847 Mr. R. H. Major edited for the Hakluyt Society the *Select Letters of Columbus*. This volume, a second edition of which appeared in 1870, contained the Spanish text and an English translation of the letters of Columbus relating to his first, third and fourth voyages; the letter to the Nurse; the letter of Dr. Chanca; the De Torres Memorandum, and extracts from the will of Diego Mendez. In 1892 the same Society issued an English translation, but not the Spanish text, of Las Casas' précis of the *Journal* of the first voyage, in a volume which was edited by Sir Clements R. Markham and which contained also materials relating to the voyages of John Cabot and Gaspar Corte Real. Both Mr. Major and Sir Clements Markham were compelled to rely mainly upon the Spanish text of the documents which had been printed in 1825 by Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, in his *Colección de los Viages y Descubrimientos*.

Since the volumes in question were published, however, the folio version of the *Letter* describing the results of the first voyage has become known, and a far more accurate text of the most important documents has been published by Cesare de Lollis in his *Scritti di Colombo*.

The first volume of the present collection of documents contains the material relating to the first and second voyages which was contained in Mr. Major's *Select Letters*, with the addition of the account given by Andrés Bernáldez of the exploration of the coasts of Cuba and Jamaica in 1494. Subsequent volumes will contain the remainder of the material edited by Mr. Major, the text and a translation of the précis of the *Journal*, and other materials.

I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to those who have assisted me in the preparation of this volume, and more especially to the staff of the Reading Room of the British Museum and to Mr. F. P. Sprent, Honorary Secretary of the Hakluyt Society.

CECIL JANE

May 1930.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I

PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTION	
The Objective of Columbus	xiii
Notes on the Documents	cxxiii
LIST OF WORKS CITED	cli
DOCUMENTS	
FIRST VOYAGE	
Letter of Columbus	2
SECOND VOYAGE	
1. Letter of Dr. Chanca, written to the City of Seville .	20
2. Memorandum of Christopher Columbus, sent to Ferdinand and Isabella by Antonio de Torres .	74
3. Andrés Bernáldez, History of the Catholic Sovereigns Don Ferdinand and Doña Isabella, Chapters 123-31 .	114
INDEX	169

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The De Orchi Portrait of Columbus	<i>Frontispiece</i>
[<i>Reputed to be the original once in the Jovian Gallery at Oomo.</i>]	
Map to illustrate the first two voyages	1
Map to illustrate the voyage of Columbus to Cuba and Jamaica in 1494	114
General map of the four voyages of Columbus	<i>At end</i>

INTRODUCTION

THE OBJECTIVE OF COLUMBUS

I

THE discovery of America by Columbus is one of the few events in the history of mankind of which the importance can scarcely be overestimated. In its most obvious aspect, indeed, the achievement of Columbus cannot be justly described as unique, since it is not to be supposed that no European had ever before crossed the Atlantic and since it is impossible to reject as mere inventions all the stories of a pre-Columbian discovery.¹ It is true that among those stories there are some of which the absurdity is so palpable as hardly to require demonstration. For one, there is no better evidence than the testimony of a fifteenth-century poem and of a sixteenth-century fabrication; the philological arguments which have been advanced to prove its truth are more ingenuous than rational. The narrative of another pre-discovery is alleged to have been contained in documents which have since been conveniently destroyed; their authenticity may be gauged from the fact that they claimed for the hero, whose exploits they recounted, the honour of having anticipated not only Columbus, but also Vasco da Gama and Cabral.² Greater credence might, perhaps, be given to certain other stories, were it not that they are marred by the appearance in them of gross improbabilities. In one, the inhabitants of the newly found lands spoke Latin; in another, the king of these lands had with him an interpreter who understood Arabic; it may be safely concluded that if either of these statements be true, the country concerned did not lie beyond the Atlantic. In one story, a type of civilization is found which certainly

¹ For the stories of a pre-Columbian discovery, cp. Major, *Select Letters of Columbus*, Introduction; Harrisse, *The Discovery of North America*.

² Cp. Gaffarel, *Les Découvertes françaises du XIV^{me} au XVI^{me} siècle*; and *Études sur les Rapports de l'Amérique et de l'ancien continent*. Perhaps the most effective criticism of this story is contained in Fernandez Duro, *Pinzón en el descubrimiento de las Indias* (Appendix IV, *Pinzón en las Indias ante Colón*): 'No concibiendo el envidiable genio francés que cosa grande, noble ó provechosa, . . . haya tenido iniciativa fuera de Francia.'

never existed in America at any time ; in all these narratives, there is so obvious an element of falsehood, that it becomes questionable whether there is also any element of truth, and there is generally so much obscurity that no conclusions can be confidently based upon them. The very most that can be asserted is that, before the date of the first voyage of Columbus, attempts had been made to reach lands which were believed to exist in the west and that it is not improbable that some measure of success attended one or other of these attempts.

The expeditions of the Norsemen, however, fall into a different category.¹ There is no doubt that these expeditions were actually made or that those adventurous sailors, voyaging by way of Iceland and Greenland, did reach the coast of North America. To them must be accorded the somewhat barren honour of having been the first Europeans known to have set foot on the American continent and to have, moreover, established settlements on its shores. Their exploits, however, were far more romantic than important. After having been maintained for a considerable period, communications between Scandinavia and America were interrupted ; the settlements which had been founded were abandoned or destroyed, and such accounts of them as have been preserved suffice to prove that the memory of their existence soon became both vague and confused. In Europe generally the story of the voyages of the Norsemen was apparently little known and less regarded ; if it did serve to induce Prince Henry the Navigator to conceive of the possibility of a north-west passage to India, there is no evidence to show that it inspired either the fifteenth-century efforts to cross the Atlantic or the final attempt of Columbus. It was, indeed, with considerable justice that the discoverer declared that until he had made his first voyage there was no knowledge, but merely vague conjecture, concerning the western hemisphere.

It was the achievement of Columbus to convert conjecture

¹ On the Northmen, there is a vast literature. Valuable bibliographies will be found in Lucas, *Annals of the voyages of the brothers Nicolo and Antonio Zeno* ; and in Nansen, *The Northern Mists*. A new work on the subject by Mr. T. D. Kendrick, *History of the Vikings*, is about to appear.

into certainty, to substitute knowledge for hypothesis, and to open a way across the Atlantic which has never since been closed. He thereby gave a new world, not so much to Castile and Leon, as the oft-quoted phrase declares him to have done, as to Europe and to European civilization. Of the momentous character of this achievement there can be no question; it is not the less momentous because its accomplishment sooner or later was in reality inevitable.¹ The importance of most events seems constantly to diminish as they recede into the background of the past. The drama of history moves on; new incidents occur to attract the attention or to excite the wonder of mankind, and that which was once of absorbing interest ceases to be even remembered save by a few. To the age in which they occurred, the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII or the sack of Rome by the troops of Charles V appeared to be events that could never be forgotten. To-day it may well seem to be strange that so great significance was ever attached to them. But in the case of the discovery of America by Columbus, the exact contrary is true. The wonder is not that it should have astonished those who then lived, but that it should have astonished them so little; not that the magnitude of the event should have been recognized, but that it should not have been recognized more fully. For its importance is not less, but more, obvious to-day than it was a hundred, two hundred, four hundred years ago. That importance appears to become constantly greater with the passage of time, with the development of those lands for the colonization and exploitation of which by Europeans Columbus paved the way. In a very well-known passage, Gomara declares the discovery of the Indies to have been the greatest event since the creation of the world, save the incarnation and death of Him who created it.² It might with justice be added that no event of such moment can ever occur again, unless, perhaps, the tracts of space be bridged and communication established between the Earth and her sister planets.

¹ So much may be legitimately argued from the fact that only eight years after the first voyage of Columbus, Cabral accidentally reached the coast of Brazil.

² Gomara, *Historia General de las Indias*, vol. I, p. 4 [ed. 1922]. The passage occurs in the epistle dedicatory, addressed to Charles V.

2

While the importance of the Columbian discovery of America hardly admits of doubt and has indeed been never seriously denied, the degree of credit which should in justice be accorded to the discoverer has always been and still is a matter of dispute. On this point, there was diversity of opinion even during the lifetime of Columbus; the question was debated in the course of the lawsuit brought by his son against the crown, and the controversy is reflected in the pages of the earliest historians of the event. In the sixteenth century, the point primarily at issue was that of the extent and situation of the lands actually discovered by Columbus, a matter of supreme importance both to his heir, who was naturally anxious to control or at least to draw revenue from as wide an area as possible, and to the king, who was as naturally anxious to limit that area and to prevent the emergence in the New World of 'an overmighty subject'. When, however, a compromise on this point had been accepted by the third admiral, Luis Columbus,¹ this aspect of the question was no longer of practical importance. In due course, the fuller exploration of the coast of the continent solved such problems as that of the geographical relationship between Veragua and Paria, the general outline of the New World became known, and eventually nothing in this connexion remained to be determined save the identification of certain points within a limited and well-defined area. For all practical purposes, the territorial extent of the discoveries of Columbus was settled; that which remained to be decided was of no more than academic interest and gave rise to no very serious debate.

But the question of the degree of credit due to Columbus was not thereby also settled. It was still disputed whether he could justly be regarded as having been ultimately responsible for all the discoveries made in the New World, whether he had conceived of the project, which he carried out, as a result of his own thought and experience, whether he was

¹ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 112, note 1.

indeed a man of exceptional intelligence, whether he had indeed, as he claimed, achieved something which no other man could have achieved. There is abundant evidence that opinion differed on these points at a very early date. It would not have been necessary for Columbus to insist, as he does insist with almost wearisome iteration in his extant writings, upon the justice of his claim and the magnitude of his services, had not that claim been seriously challenged and had not those services been seriously belittled. A conflict of opinion is very clearly indicated in the interrogatories addressed to the witnesses in the lawsuit brought by Diego Columbus and in the answers given by those witnesses.¹ Certainly as early as the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the claim of Martin Alonso Pinzón to an equal or almost equal share of the credit for the discovery had been urged; at as early a date, the story of the mysterious pilot, of whose deathbed confidences Columbus was alleged to have made unacknowledged use, was current at Santo Domingo.² In modern times, it has been argued that the famous letter of Toscanelli and the whole story of his correspondence with Columbus was a fabrication designed to refute those who had declared the discoverer to have been an ignorant, though fortunate, adventurer,³ and it might possibly be urged with as great or greater plausibility that to attain the same object, the account of his early education, given by his son and

¹ Cp. 'Pleitos de Colón', in *Doc. Ind.*, &c. 2^e serie, 7-8.

² The story of the pilot is given as current gossip by Las Casas (*Historia de las Indias*, i. 14), who neither affirms nor denies its truth, and by Oviedo (*Historia General y Natural de las Indias*, ii. 2), who adds: 'por mí yo lo tengo por falso.' It was related as a fact by Gomara (*Historia General de las Indias*, c. 13), and, with some elaboration of detail, by Garcilasso de la Vega (*Primera Parte de los Comentarios Reales*, c. 3). The intrinsic improbability of the story has been generally recognized by all critical scholars, and the various inconsistencies between the different versions have been indicated. The story was, however, accepted by Vignaud (*Histoire critique de la Grande Entreprise de Christophe Colomb*), and it has found some other, more obscure, advocates. Luis Ulloa (*Xristo Ferens Colom*) has recently argued that Columbus was himself the mysterious pilot, that the event occurred in 1477, and that the story as related is a somewhat vague record of a fact; the evidence which he adduces in support of his contention is hardly convincing.

³ Cp. Vignaud, *Toscanelli and Columbus*. For a destructive criticism of the arguments of Vignaud, cp. De Lollis, *Cristoforo Colombo* (ed. 1923), *Disquisizione critica sulle genesi e sul carattere dell' impresa di Cristoforo Colombo*.

repeated by Las Casas, was invented. When Gomara¹ declared that it was uncertain when or by whom the Indies were discovered, he was no more than expressing a doubt which had been felt by some from the very first.

During the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, however, controversy on this aspect of the question was suspended. Antonio de Herrera² produced a version of the story of the discovery which, perhaps in some measure because no material interests were now involved, was generally received as being at once authentic and complete. This version was rendered classical by the literary genius of Washington Irving³ and the poetic fervour of Lamartine,⁴ and was so universally accepted that it appeared to be established beyond the reach of criticism. It was, indeed, not until the second half of the nineteenth century that it was called in question. Down to that time no one was seriously inclined to deny that Columbus was a man of outstanding intelligence, whose genius had enabled him to triumph over the opposition presented to him by the prejudice of an ignorant age.

It was, perhaps, the very fact that his credit stood astonishingly high which ultimately led to attempts to destroy it. He was already so far exalted that some of his more enthusiastic admirers hoped that he might be exalted still more. Roselly de Lorgues⁵ and others hailed him as a Catholic hero and demanded that his name should be included in the calendar of saints. This demand produced a natural reaction; not one *advocatus diaboli*, but many, forthwith appeared. Some were impelled by their critical spirit to expose the extravagances of these panegyrists; others were, perhaps, moved less by a passion for the truth than by religious animosity to vilify a man who was asserted to have been a foremost champion of a creed which they regarded with aversion.

¹ Gomara, *loc. cit.* and c. 13.

² Herrera, *Historia General de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano*. For the history of Columbus, the work of Herrera is almost entirely based upon that of Las Casas, to whose MS. he had access.

³ Washington Irving, *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*.

⁴ Lamartine, *Christophe Colomb*.

⁵ Roselly de Lorgues, *Christophe Colomb and l'Ambassadeur de Dieu*. He was followed by Belloy, *Christophe Colomb*, and Bloy, *Le Révélateur du Globe*.

Fernandez Duro¹ subjected certain aspects of the accepted story of the discovery to a damaging critical analysis, more especially undertaking the rehabilitation of Pinzón. Aaron Goodrich² revived the story of the dying pilot and endeavoured to show that Columbus was a mean adventurer who merited nothing but contempt. A considered and substantial contribution to the revision of the classical account was supplied by the labours of Henry Harrisse,³ whose profound scholarship commanded respect even from those who were unable to accept his conclusions. Finally, in the last decade of the century, the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery was the occasion for the appearance of a flood of Columbian literature, in much of which the received version was challenged in many of its details.⁴

The essential accuracy of that version was, however, still generally accepted. As the classical story had not been discredited by the earlier researches of Muñoz⁵ and Navarrete,⁶ or by the critical examination of certain of its aspects by Alexander von Humboldt,⁷ so it survived the publication or republication at the close of the nineteenth century of a number of original documents.⁸ The reputation of Columbus as having been in the fullest sense the author of his discovery was not really assailed.

But the attention of a number of scholars had now been

¹ Fernandez Duro, *Colón y Pinzón; Colón y la Historia Póstuma; Nebulosa de Colón; and Pinzón en el Descubrimiento de Las Indias*.

² Goodrich, *History of the Character and Achievements of the so-called Christopher Columbus*.

³ Harrisse, *Christophe Colomb*; and various other works and papers.

⁴ Among the lives of Columbus which appeared at this time may be mentioned those by Sir Clements Markham, in England; Justin Winsor, in the United States; Asensio, in Spain; Sophus Ruge, in Germany; De Lollis, in Italy. A mass of monographs also appeared in various countries. One life of Columbus was distributed as an advertisement.

⁵ Muñoz, *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*. Muñoz made a vast collection of materials for his history, which he was officially employed to write, but died before his work was completed.

⁶ Navarrete, *Colección de los Viages y Descubrimientos*.

⁷ Humboldt, *Examen critique de l'histoire de la Géographie du nouveau continent*.

⁸ Especially the *Raccolta di Documenti e Studi . . . dalla R. Commissione Colombiana*, and the papers of Barriack and Alba, *Autógrafos de Cristóbal Colón*.

focussed upon the question of the reliability of the accepted version; the materials upon which any discussion of this question had necessarily to be based had been rendered more accessible and their number had been increased by the production of further documents of value, while the whole mass of material had been more carefully examined and sifted. In such circumstances, it was probably inevitable that sooner or later the classical story of the discovery would be seriously attacked, and such an attack was in fact delivered upon it in the early years of the present century. Henry Vignaud¹ endeavoured both to disprove that which had been regarded as proven and to establish a new version of the genesis and the accomplishment of the project of Columbus. To this task he brought much erudition and infinite patience, but he perhaps permitted the sobriety of his judgement to be impaired by the intensity of his convictions. His theory failed to win any very wide acceptance; the majority of critics were inclined to feel with De Lollis that Vignaud was 'fedele al proprio sistema di costruire su ciò che non esiste a distruzione di ciò che esiste.'²

On the other hand, the effect of the work of Vignaud was to create the impression that the accepted account of the discovery required at least fuller substantiation than it had as yet received and that the accuracy of its broad outlines, no less than that of some of its details, was disputable. Some were consequently inclined to believe that the true story had yet to be written and were led by this belief to put forward novel versions of that story. In so far as the question of the reputation of Columbus was concerned, some of these versions tended to maintain and even to enhance the credit of the discoverer, while others had an exactly contrary tendency. But neither those which were favourable nor those which were unfavourable to Columbus have secured that measure of credence which was once universally accorded to the classical account. The result of the controversy up to

¹ Vignaud elaborated his thesis in three main works: *Toscanelli and Columbus*; *Études critiques sur la Vie de Colomb*; and *Histoire critique de la Grande Entreprise de Christophe Colomb*. He afterwards summarized his arguments and conclusions in *Le vrai Christophe Colomb*.

² De Lollis, *op. cit.*, p. xvii.

the present has been rather to destroy than to construct, to suggest doubts rather than to establish certainties, and such definite conclusions as may perhaps be said to have been reached have been rather negative than positive. The question of the degree of credit justly attributable to Columbus has so far remained a matter of debate.

3

A vital point in this debate has been that of the opinions held by Columbus upon certain questions which were more or less eagerly canvassed among his contemporaries. Since the age in which he lived was one of vigorous intellectual life and since the spirit of inquiry was very active, speculation upon almost every topic was naturally rife. That speculation, while it was not always informed by any very highly developed critical faculty, was often both ingenious and daring. Despite the respect generally accorded to the writers of antiquity, there was a certain disposition to question the opinions of even the most revered masters and a certain inclination to oppose to the authority of the past the results of present experience. When Columbus, having controverted a generally received opinion, remarked that a correction of common belief need cause no surprise, 'since the farther one goes, the more one learns,'¹ he was but expressing in what Las Casas calls his 'homely language'² the current conviction that no blind adherence should be given to accepted dogmas and that those dogmas should be reviewed in the light of increased knowledge.

As was only natural, among the questions which were so discussed was that of the nature of the world, its exact size, the true proportion between land and water, the character of that portion of the globe which was as yet unknown. Speculation was here all the more active because the discoveries made by the Portuguese had both revealed much that was new and apparently demonstrated the falsity of some once current beliefs.³ In this field, rather perhaps than in any other, it seemed to be altogether legitimate to appeal

¹ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 42.

² Las Casas, i. 127.

³ For example, the idea that the torrid zone was uninhabitable.

to practical experience as against authority, and it was in fact very generally agreed that there was abundant room for a revision of opinion. The nature and extent of that revision, however, was more debatable. While some were inclined to disregard authority entirely and to rely solely upon experience, others were less ready to break with the past and wished to effect a reconciliation between the views of ancient authors whom they revered and the statements of contemporary explorers whose veracity they were not disposed to doubt. The intellectual world was divided into those who were radical and those who were conservative in their attitude towards these questions.

Upon one point, indeed, both radicals and conservatives were agreed. By the middle of the fifteenth century, the sphericity of the globe was accepted as a fact by all, or at the very least by almost all, educated men throughout western Europe. There is no foundation for the assertion, which was once credited, that in Spain a contrary view was maintained by orthodox theologians and supported by religious prejudice.¹ On the contrary, even so simple-minded and ingenuous an ecclesiastic as Andrés Bernáldez,² whose freedom from any taint of heresy cannot be disputed, entertained no doubts at all upon this point. And as an inevitable corollary to this belief in the sphericity of the globe, it was equally recognized that its circumnavigation was theoretically possible. No one seriously denied that any one who journeyed continuously eastward or westward would eventually regain his starting-point, provided that his journey were not somehow cut short.

But upon the further question of the practicability of such circumnavigation, there was a marked division of opinion. Some were convinced that the undertaking was no less practically than theoretically possible, and that for its success no more was required than that a man should have suitable ships and reasonably good fortune, and that, as one writer piously adds, 'God should go with him'. Others, however, and they probably a majority even of the most educated,

¹ On these points, cp. Vignaud, *Histoire critique*, vol. I, pp. 720 *et seq.*, and Nunn, *Geographical Conceptions of Columbus*.

² Cp. *infra*, p. 118.

held on various grounds an exactly contrary view. Some argued that the distance which to the westward separated Europe from Asia was so great that it could not possibly be traversed; it was suggested that no ship could carry provisions sufficient for so extended a voyage and that, long before land was sighted, the voyagers would have perished from starvation. Some contended that in so vast a waste of waters as was supposed to lie between the two continents a ship would be infallibly lost, and believed moreover that in the midst of the Atlantic there were unknown perils, against which no provision could be made and which could not be surmounted by any human effort. Some were disposed to regard any attempt to accomplish such a journey as being in the nature of blasphemy against God; they held that it was part of the hidden purposes of the Almighty that the mysteries of the western ocean should not be penetrated and that a divine inhibition had been laid upon man, forbidding him even to seek to lift the veil behind which those mysteries lay concealed.

Neither those who believed nor those who disbelieved in the practicability of crossing the Atlantic were entirely agreed among themselves as to the length of the voyage which it would be necessary to accomplish. Concerning the Far East, there was a paucity of exact information; the conjectures which served in the place of knowledge were varied, and on the question of the eastward extension of the Asiatic continent opinion was divided. On the whole, the authority of Ptolemy appeared to prevail; his estimate of the distance by land from western Europe to the extremity of Asia was very widely accepted, and it was very generally supposed that no mainland was to be found beyond the one hundred and eightieth parallel. As a necessary consequence, it followed that half the entire circumference of the globe lay to the westward between the Canaries and Asia, and that a transatlantic voyage would thus be one of vast magnitude. Some, however, held a different view. The travels of Marco Polo and others suggested that the Asiatic geography of Ptolemy required modification, and some were inclined to prefer the earlier estimate of Marinus of Tyre and

thus considerably to reduce the distance at which eastern Asia lay to the west of Spain. It did not, however, follow that those who accepted the greater, or that those who accepted the lesser, estimate of that distance, adopted also corresponding views concerning the practicability of the journey. Some belonging to both schools of thought believed that other difficulties than that of mere distance would prevent the accomplishment of such a voyage, and some belonging to both schools of thought held that no difficulties save that of distance existed, while of these last, some considered the obstacle of distance to be insurmountable, others that it could be overcome.

A similar diversity of opinion prevailed concerning that which lay to the west between Europe and Asia. From classical times, stories of lands hidden amid the mists of the Atlantic had been current and had not been wholly disbelieved; if some considered them to be the product of the lively Hellenic imagination, others were disposed to regard them as born of lost knowledge and to suppose that those voyages which were vaguely recorded had actually occurred.¹ In the fifteenth century, the existence of Antilla was widely credited; the legend of the Island of the Seven Cities was not thought to be entirely legendary. While some were convinced that when the Canaries and Azores had been left behind, no other land would be sighted until the islands off the Asiatic coast were reached, this conviction was by no means universal. Some believed that in the Atlantic there lay islands, as yet undiscovered or at most but dimly sighted, which were more or less numerous, although not possessed of any great importance, and this belief found expression on early maps. Others believed that in the ocean there were lands, insular indeed in character, but yet of great extent, wealth, and populousness, the discovery of which would be of almost incalculable value to the discoverer; so many expeditions would not have ventured out into the Atlantic had not this belief been somewhat widely held.

This opinion, however, was not universally shared even by those who refused to admit that the other hemisphere

concerning which there was no certain knowledge, was a mere waste of waters. There were not a few who believed that any land which might be discovered in that hemisphere would prove to be uninhabited and uninhabitable. It is true that the explorations of the Portuguese had demonstrated that men could and did live south of the equator, and that the habitability of all the five zones was consequently admitted by very many to be a theoretical possibility. It was hardly admitted to be more. Such travellers' tales as those collected by Sir John Mandeville were somewhat readily accepted in an age which was rather inquisitive than critical and which was perhaps almost eager to credit the incredible. Many expected that if the other hemisphere were ever to be explored, it would be found to be peopled not by men, but by monstrous beings, and the degree to which this expectation had been entertained may be gathered from the fact that, when America had been discovered, there was a certain reluctance to admit that its inhabitants were human and an ever present fear or hope that sooner or later monsters would be found.

Upon no one of these points can it be asserted with confidence that there was any very settled opinion. They were all debated, and concerning each diverse conclusions were reached even by the most educated men of the age. The most that can be said is that it appears to be probable that it was more generally believed than not that the circumnavigation of the globe was a practical impossibility; that there were, however, lands of uncertain character and extent lying beyond the Canaries and between Europe and Asia, and that were it possible to reach those lands, they would be found to be both habitable and inhabited, and perhaps to be peopled by a race of men not very dissimilar from the races which were already known, and that in any case they would prove to be rich both in precious metals and in spices.

From his extant writings, it is abundantly clear that Columbus was well aware of the existence of debate upon

these questions. It is possible, if no more than possible, that before his first voyage he had considered some at least of the points involved.¹ But neither the conclusions to which his consideration of these problems led him, nor the grounds upon which those conclusions were based, can be exactly determined; it cannot even be dogmatically asserted that he had reached any conclusions at all. It is impossible to decide absolutely whether any opinions which he may have held at the time when he embarked upon his great adventure were or were not crystallized, and it is equally impossible to estimate precisely the degree to which his views were modified, if they were modified at all, in the light of that practical experience and knowledge which he gained in the course of his four voyages.

This uncertainty is the greater because such materials as are available to assist in the determination of the views of Columbus are at once somewhat scanty and somewhat unsatisfactory in character. No secure reliance can be placed upon those indications which are to be found in the writings of Ferdinand Columbus² and Las Casas.³ Their works were composed at a time when the discovery had long been an accomplished fact; they produce no documentary evidence derived from Columbus himself and dating before the event, and their value as guides on this particular point is rendered somewhat suspicious by the fact that in the account which they give of the early life of the discoverer, there appear some flagrant errors and some probable inaccuracies.

Recourse has therefore to be had to the writings of Columbus himself, and the assistance which they afford is hardly greater. Such information as they do supply is very largely contained in documents which certainly postdate the discovery and which are therefore of uncertain value where his opinion before that event is concerned. Nor can the statements or hints contained in the *Journal* be regarded with any complete confidence. It is true that it is so probable as to be

¹ Cp. especially, his letter concerning his third voyage (*infra*, vol. ii, pp. 1 *et seq.*).

² Cp. Ferdinand Columbus, *Historie*, c. 6-9.

³ Cp. Las Casas, *op. cit.*, i. 5-14.

morally certain that Columbus kept a log-book¹ of his voyage which was written from day to day, but the diary of his first voyage is preserved only in the précis made by Las Casas from a copy, and even if the substantial accuracy of the précis be admitted, it obviously has not that authority which would be possessed by the original were it still in existence.² It is impossible to prove that entries which purport to have been written before the discovery had been accomplished were actually so written; it is impossible to know whether, even if they were made at the time at which they appear to have been made, they were or were not afterwards modified. There is some reason for believing that Columbus himself subjected his original diary to a certain measure of editing and that the aim of his editing was to conceal his errors and to enhance his reputation for knowledge. But since the extent to which the original was edited cannot be even approximately determined, the evidence of the *Journal* for the ideas of Columbus before he reached the Indies can only be accepted with reserve.

There remain those notes³ which Columbus wrote in the margins of various books, and here again the evidence supplied is of doubtful value. It is at least arguable that they postdate the discovery, in which case they afford no surer clues than are supplied by other documents composed after the event. But even if it be admitted that the notes or that some of the notes were written at an earlier period, the light thrown by them on the question does little more than emphasize the darkness. For the most part, they serve only to indicate those passages in the authors which made an impression upon the mind of the annotator; it remains doubtful whether that impression was one of approval or of disapproval, whether the marking of a passage is to be taken as indicating assent or dissent. It becomes a question of choosing between two equally possible interpretations, and the likelihood of misinterpretation in such circumstances is

¹ It is, however, not certain, and it is perhaps improbable, that Columbus wrote this log-book with his own hand.

² Cp. further; *infra*, pp. xlv-xlvi; xcv-xcix.

³ The notes are printed by De Lollis (*Scritti di Colombo*, ii, pp. 291-523; in *Rac. Col.* I. ii).

obvious. It may be added that it is not invariably certain that Columbus was the author of the notes which have been ascribed to him. The admitted similarity between his handwriting and that of his brother, Bartholomew, creates an element of doubt, and in the most recent study of the question, his authorship of many of the annotations is denied.¹

Even where it seems to be probable that Columbus was definitely expressing his own opinion, it would be rash to conclude that he was in actual fact doing so. There has sometimes been a tendency too readily to give to his statements that meaning which they appear most obviously to bear, and this tendency has been strongest when the statements, so interpreted, are in accord with that which is now known to be fact. It has too often been apparently forgotten that much which is now a commonplace to the most ignorant was then either unknown or mere hypothesis to the most learned. It has been still more frequently forgotten that Columbus was by nature somewhat reticent, that he often used words rather to obscure than to convey his meaning, and that he was constantly at pains rather to conceal than to reveal his ideas.

The available evidence for ascertaining his opinions, at least before the discovery, is therefore to be received with caution and must be so received even when it appears to be most satisfactory. Any conclusion which may be reached must be admitted to be no more than conjectural and to be essentially open to dispute. In such circumstances, dogmatism on the question would be entirely misplaced. To assert that, before he had discovered the New World, Columbus held any given opinion, would be to assert something wholly impossible of proof.

5

To form even a confident conjecture on this subject is the more difficult, because it cannot be certainly determined to what extent Columbus was in a position to come to an independent and reasoned judgement concerning those questions which were debated by his contemporaries. At one time it

¹ The most recent discussion of the handwriting of Columbus is by Streicher, *Die Kolumbus-Originale*.

was, indeed, almost taken for granted that, as an outcome of his own studies and of his own practical experience, he was fully and even exceptionally qualified to do so. He was credited with having accomplished this task and with having as a result formed opinions more just and more enlightened than those which were held by the majority even of the most educated men of his age. It was believed that it was the intellectual superiority of which he was possessed, and which he thus displayed, that enabled him to conceive of the project which he ultimately executed, and that he was indeed so far mentally in advance of his time that his views appeared to most to be heterodox and the ideas which he expressed to be the idle imaginings of a madman.

But if it would be an exaggeration to assert that this view of the intellectual equipment of Columbus has been, or indeed can be, altogether disproved, it is at least certain that it cannot be unreservedly accepted, and it is at least possible that it should be almost wholly rejected. It can be, and has been, contended, and that not without considerable plausibility, that so far from having been able to form any independent judgement, Columbus was of necessity obliged to rely, and to rely somewhat blindly, upon the judgement of others. It has been argued that he was in no position to criticize opinions advanced by his educated contemporaries and that he was even probably unable to appreciate the arguments upon which those opinions were based. It cannot be said that this view is either more or less capable of proof than is that to which it is diametrically opposed. For if the direct evidence available for the purpose of determining the attitude of Columbus be scanty and unsatisfactory, such accounts as there are of the theoretical and practical training which he had received before his first voyage are almost equally scanty and are almost more unsatisfactory.

All that concerns the origin and early life of Columbus is enveloped in a cloud of obscurity so dense that it appears to be little possible that it will ever be dissipated. That obscurity is all the greater because, to some extent, it is probably due to those who might have been supposed to have

Columbus, the son of the discoverer, and Las Casas, the friend of his family, supply approximately identical accounts of the life of Columbus down to the time of his first voyage.¹ These accounts are characterized by an absence of essential detail, by a like absence of statements which can be satisfactorily checked, and by the appearance in them of other statements, the falsity of which is either demonstrable or at least probable. With the single exception of the letter of Toscanelli, the authenticity of which has been vigorously denied, neither of these writers produce any documentary evidence to illustrate or to support the story which they tell. It is true that Ferdinand Columbus gives certain quotations alleged to have been derived from Columbus himself and that these quotations were reproduced by Las Casas, who thus may be regarded as indicating his belief that they were genuine. But since the sources from which they were drawn are not otherwise known, their accuracy cannot be described as proven and is, indeed, open to serious doubt.² The tendency of these quotations is to represent Columbus in a very favourable light, to suggest that he was possessed of considerable maritime skill and experience and that he was a personage of some importance long before he arrived at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, while one at least would seem to credit him with having come of a not undistinguished line of ancestors.

It was no more than natural that Ferdinand Columbus should be ready to enhance the reputation of his father, and that it was his wish to do so is, indeed, clear from the whole tenour of the *Historie* and more especially from that passage in which he so vigorously attacks Giustiniani.³ His account of Bobadilla⁴ suffices to prove that his filial piety was greater than his passion for truth and justice, and it cannot be regarded as a wholly untenable hypothesis that he may have

¹ Ferdinand Columbus, *Historie*, cc. 1, 2, and 4; Las Casas, i. 2, 3, 4.

² This is, for example, the case with the statement, 'Io non sono il primo Ammiraglio della mia famiglia', which is said by Ferdinand Columbus (c. 2) to come from a letter to the nurse of Prince Juan, but which does not appear in the letter which has been preserved.

³ Ferdinand Columbus, *loc. cit.*

⁴ Ferdinand Columbus, cc. 84-5. Cp. Vidart, *Colón y Bobadilla*.

misinterpreted or modified statements made by his father and that he may even have ascribed to his father statements which he never made. It may be added that, although he was certainly the author of a life of Columbus, the original Spanish version of that life is lost and that the *Historie*, as preserved, is almost certainly not a faithful representation of the work as it was written. Quite apart from those minor errors which are always likely to appear in any translation, it is probable that the extant version is disfigured both by additions and omissions, and its evidence must always be received with a certain reserve.¹ To base any positive assertion concerning the early life of the discoverer upon the unsupported testimony of his son is at least somewhat unwise; its unwisdom is the greater because Ferdinand Columbus himself admits the deficiency of his information and professes to have been unwilling to endeavour to supply that deficiency by questioning his father.²

It is unlikely that, even if he had not been so unwilling, his curiosity would have been gratified. Concerning all that related to his life before the discovery of America, Columbus was singularly reticent. In all his voluminous writings, he never once mentions his own name;³ he preferred to use a curious and perhaps inexplicable cypher as a signature even to official documents. He makes no allusion to his father or to his mother; he alludes to his wife only in a manner so indirect that, for all that he says, he might never have been married.⁴ His mention of Genoa as his birthplace appears in a document which is not in his autograph and which had no legal validity: the authenticity of this document has, indeed, been hotly denied.⁵ Such reticence concerning his origin and his more intimate private affairs is, perhaps, susceptible of ready explanation upon various grounds; quite apart from other possible reasons for concealment of

¹ On the character of the work of Ferdinand Columbus, cp. HARRISSE, *Fernand Colomb*; VIGNAUD, *Histoire critique*; CADDEO, *Le Historie*, Pt. I. Int. pp. xix et seq.

² Ferdinand Columbus, c. 4.

³ Unless he be regarded as having written the Prologue to the *Journal*: on which, cp. *infra*, pp. xciii-xcv.

⁴ Cp. *Journal*, 14 Feb. and *Rac. Col.* I. ii. p. 65.

⁵ On the *Institución del Mayorazgo*, cp. ALTOLAGUIERRE, in *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* (86, p. 307, and 88, p. 330).

this kind, Columbus would not have been the first or the last man to be ashamed of the humility of his birth, and that he was humbly born admits of no doubt. But it is less easy to explain his reticence upon other matters, both because it would appear to have been to his interest to be informative and because his reticence is that of verbosity. Columbus makes a comparatively large number of statements concerning his early life; up to a certain point, especially if the quotations in the *Historie* be accepted as authentic, he supplies a comparatively large amount of information. When, however, this information is examined somewhat more closely, it becomes clear that it is in reality scanty enough and that it is most essentially vague. He seems to have been almost scrupulously careful to avoid making any statement of which the accuracy could be checked, and the impression thus created that he was anxious to hide, rather than to make known, the truth, is enhanced by the fact that he appears to have been no more communicative in his intercourse with his personal friends. There is no reason for doubting the affectionate regard in which he was held by Andrés Bernáldez and Diego Mendez, but whereas the former states that Columbus was born at Genoa,¹ the latter declared that he was born at Savona,² while Bernáldez can give no more detailed description of him, before the discovery, than that he was 'a hawker of printed books, carrying on his trade in this land of Andalusia.'³ Peter Martyr Angleria, who professes to have known Columbus well and whose inquisitive mind can but have impelled him to seek to learn everything that was to be learned concerning him, had obviously here to allow his curiosity to remain unsatisfied; 'Cristophorus quidam Colonus vir Ligur' is the best account of the discoverer which he was able to supply to Giovanni Borromeo.⁴

¹ Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, cc. 118, 131. The statement made e.g. by Ulloa (*op. cit.*), that Bernáldez contradicts himself by saying in one place that Columbus was a native of Genoa and in another that he was from the province of Milan, betrays ignorance of the fact that, at this period, Genoa was regarded as being comprised within the duchy of Milan.

² Uhagon, *La Patria de Colón según los documentos de las Ordenes militares*.

³ Bernáldez, c. 118.

⁴ Peter Martyr Angleria, *Opus Epistolarum*, Ep. CXXX (ed. 1670). Such letters of Peter Martyr as concern Columbus are printed in *Res. Col.* (III. ii.)

If Columbus did in fact wish to throw a veil of mystery over the events of his early life, he was entirely successful in doing so. The most exhaustive modern research has done very little towards elucidating this mystery. It has rendered possible the putting forward of a number of more or less probable conjectures, but it has failed to discover any indubitably accurate information concerning those points upon which Columbus was himself thus reticent. Ample room is still left for the elaboration of the most diverse theories of his origin and early life and for producing in support of those theories of much which appears to be evidence of value until it is examined. Of these theories, it is hardly necessary to say more than that they demand the rejection of a number of contemporary statements for no better reason than that they controvert the theories, and that their authors would appear to regard reiterated assertion as sufficing to convert pure hypothesis into ascertained fact. They contribute nothing towards the establishment of an account of the life of Columbus, before the discovery, which can be regarded as being beyond dispute. It may, indeed, be asserted that no such account can be produced from such materials as are at present available.

6

While, however, it must be admitted that concerning the facts of the early history of Columbus no absolute certainty is attainable and that, upon some points in that history, it is almost dangerous even to hazard a conjecture, it is yet possible to establish a number of probabilities, of which some are perhaps no more than probabilities, but of which some may be legitimately regarded as amounting to moral certainties. It thus becomes also possible to form a reasonably just estimate of the qualifications possessed by Columbus for the task of weighing opinions put forward by his contemporaries and for arriving at an independent judgement upon the questions which they discussed. The extent of his theoretical and practical training can be determined, not indeed

either no more and no less than a man of his time, or in advance of or behind his age. It is even possible to contend that both the genesis of his project and the objective which he sought can be determined with some approach to certainty.

Among the points connected with his early life which may be regarded as being established beyond all reasonable doubt is that of his Italian origin. It is true that many attempts have been made to show that he was of another nationality, but if these attempts reflect some credit upon the ingenuity, they reflect none upon the critical capacity, of their authors, and are distinguished neither by ability to estimate the value of evidence nor by any sobriety of judgement. Their futility is, indeed, obvious in view of the unanimous testimony of all those writers who were personally acquainted with Columbus and of all those who were in a position to know the truth, and in view of the coincident absence of any contemporary witness in favour of any view other than that so expressed. To suggest, as has been suggested, that all these writers were guilty of wilful fabrication or even that they were grossly ignorant, is to bring a charge for which there is no shadow of justification and of which the falsity is almost self-evident; it is to degrade the writing of history to the level of scurrilous pamphleteering.

Nor can it be seriously questioned that he was a Genoese, despite the fact that upon this point some doubt seems to have been entertained by his son.¹ Even if the positive evidence contained in the *Institución del Mayorazgo* be rejected as inadmissible, it cannot be denied that Columbus is described as a native of the territory of the Genoese republic by all those who knew him and who have made any definite statement on the point. It would appear to be certain that he was so regarded by his contemporaries and that they were not mistaken is more probable than improbable. The fact that during his lifetime he was charged with designing to hand over the Indies to a foreign prince² supplies some indirect evidence in favour of the same view, as perhaps does the further fact that he was regarded with antipathy by a number of Spaniards from all parts of the Iberian peninsula.

¹ Ferdinand Columbus, c. 1.

² Cp. *infra*, vol. iii, p. 108.

It is not absolutely certain, although it is highly probable, that he was born in Genoa itself and that he was the son of the Domenico Colombo and the Susanna Fontanarossa who figure in the notarial records of that city.¹ That his exact birthplace and his precise parentage should be doubtful can be a matter of no surprise save to those who forget that the keeping of a regular register of births, marriages, and deaths had not yet been enjoined by a council of the Church. In the absence of any statement by the individuals most immediately concerned, the parentage of those who belonged to the poorer classes was in that age always somewhat uncertain and was rarely placed on record unless it became necessary to do so for some legal reason, while the surname, Colombo, was sufficiently common in northern Italy for the identity of any one person of that name to be doubtful. That Columbus was of plebeian birth is explicitly stated by Gallo² and is almost angrily admitted by Ferdinand Columbus himself.³ For the suggestion that his family had descended from wealth to poverty, or at least from eminence to obscurity, there is no more evidence than such as is continually produced to-day by those who, having attained prominence, are eager to claim a distinguished original or who, being in fact poor, are somewhat ashamed of their poverty.

There is even less foundation for the further suggestion that, in his boyhood, Columbus received a far more elaborate education than that which was normally received by those of his class.⁴ All the balance of probability is in favour of the

¹ The relevant passages from the records are printed in *Rac. Col.* III. ii.

² Gallo, 'De Navigatione Columbi' (*Rac. Col.* III. ii).

³ While Ferdinand Columbus (c. 2) denies the statement of Giustiniani (*Psalterium* in *Rac. Col.* III. ii) that Columbus was of plebeian birth, he immediately afterwards quotes the alleged comparison by his father of his case with that of David. Ferdinand Columbus had already (c. 1) declared his refusal to assert the Roman ancestry of his father. It was left for Las Casas (i. 2) to give currency to the story that Columbus was descended from 'that Colonus' mentioned by Tacitus, that in Spain he reverted to the original name of his family, &c. Oviédo states that, while he was 'hombre de honestos parientes', his family was 'antiguo é noble' (ii. 2). Columbus himself continually suggests that he was of humble origin: cp., for example, the letter prefixed to the 'Libro de las Profecías' (*Scrritti*, I. ii, pp. 79-83): 'non doto en letras, de lego marinero, de hombre mundanal.'

⁴ For such accounts of his early education, cp. Ferdinand Columbus, c. 4; Las Casas, i. 3; Barros, *Asia*, Dec. i. 11. 2. In the letter prefixed to the 'Libro de

view that he was no better educated than he might have been expected to be. Bernáldez describes him as a man 'of little book learning, although of great natural intelligence,'¹ and this description would seem to be not unjust. The fact that Columbus never used Italian even when corresponding with those of his own nationality argues that his literacy dates from a period when he had already left Italy.² The character of the notes which he wrote in the margins of books, and that parade of learning which he makes in some of his letters, suggests that such learning as he possessed had been somewhat recently acquired, and it is by no means impossible that while he was still resident in Genoa or Savona, he was unable even to read and write.³ If this were so, it would not be surprising. The percentage of illiterates in all countries was in that age extremely high; the attainment of letters was not

las Profecías' (*Rac. Col.* I. ii, pp. 79-83), Columbus himself states that he possessed considerable learning, but he suggests that it was divinely implanted in him: 'á este mi deseo fallé á Nuestro Señor muy propicio, y ove d'él para ello espirito de yntelligencia; en la marineria me fiso abondoso, de astrologia mu dió lo que abastava, y asý de geometria, y arismética, y ingenio en el ánima, y manos para debusar espera, y en ella las cibdades, rýos y montañas, yslas y puertos, todo en su propio sytio.' In the same letter, he remarks that he may be declared by some to be unsuited for the work that he has undertaken on the ground that he is 'non doto en letras', and suggests that the statement would not be untrue, since he adds that 'out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, hath He ordained strength', and that the apostles, 'nunca deprehendieron letras.'

¹ Bernáldez, c. 118.

² Three of his extant letters are addressed to Italian correspondents; they are all in Castilian, as are his notes on the Italian translation of Pliny, with the exception of one (note 23: *Rac. Col.* I. ii, p. 472), which is in a tongue so barbarous that it needs a certain imagination to regard it as being in Italian. It can hardly be supposed that Columbus lost a faculty which he once possessed: he was, in all probability, connected with an Italian business house after leaving Genoa; the advantage of being able to correspond with his principals in their own language is obvious, and he was never blind to his material advantage. Both in Lisbon and in Spain, he was brought into contact with Italians, by intercourse with whom he might have maintained his knowledge of his native tongue and his ability to write in it. The explanation that he did not use Italian in his letters because he had never learned to write in that language would seem to be the only rational explanation: unless, therefore, it be believed that he was not an Italian, it would seem to follow that he was unable to write when he left Genoa. It may be added that he was obviously unable to write letters in Latin: had he been able to do so, he would assuredly have used that tongue in writing to Alexander VI.

³ These points are discussed at greater length in a paper which will appear in the *Hispania Americana Historical Review* in the course of 1920.

infrequently postponed until manhood had been reached, and in his boyhood Columbus can have had little leisure, if he had much inclination, to engage in studies, the material value of which was not immediately apparent.

Columbus himself asserts, or is represented as asserting, that he came of a race of sailors, that he went to sea at an early age and that he made a number of voyages, including one to Chios eastward, one to a point 'a hundred leagues beyond Tile' northward, and more than one to Guinea southward. That some members of his family were sailors is likely enough; within the territory of the Genoese republic it would in that age have probably been difficult to find any family no member of which had engaged in a maritime career. His immediate relatives, however, were probably occupied in other pursuits; if his father were Domenico Colombo, it is certain that they were rather weavers and wool carders, and perhaps tavern keepers, as Gallo states them to have been. Nor is there any direct evidence in favour of the assertion, which has been frequently made, that Columbus himself was a member of the crews of the ships in which he sailed, unless, indeed, it be admitted that he did actually command a vessel in the service of King René.¹ It is perhaps significant that he, while showing some anxiety to insist upon his maritime experience, nowhere explicitly states that he was ever himself a sailor² and that he appears to claim that his nautical knowledge was the outcome rather of the study of books than of active employment at sea.³ There is some reason for believing that at one period of his life he represented an Italian commercial house in Madeira and Lisbon,⁴ and it is certain that he was always interested in the business aspect of every question and that he was by no means devoid of business acumen.⁵ Since his skill as a navigator is more open to

¹ The story of the expedition to Tunis is accepted as true, but with some hesitation, by De Lollis (*Cristoforo Colombo*, pp. 33-5); is doubted by Harrisso (*Christophe Colomb*, i. 254-8); and denied by Vignaud (*Études critiques*, pp. 313 *et seq.*).

² Unless it be in the passage already cited (*cp. supra*, p. xxxv, note 3).

³ *Cp. supra*, p. xxxv, note 4.

⁴ *Cp. Assereto*, 'La Data della Nascita di Colombo' (*Giornale Storico e Letterario della Liguria*, v. 5-16).

⁵ *Cp. infra*, pp. 92, 106, 108 *inter alia*.

question and since he seems at times to display a lack of those qualities and of that knowledge which a practical sailor might be expected to possess,¹ it is at least possible that he made such voyages as he did make before his arrival in Spain less in the capacity of a seaman than in that of a trader.

It may, therefore, be concluded that there is no evidence to show that Columbus was especially qualified, either by reason of his theoretical knowledge or by reason of his practical experience, to form a judgement upon the various questions concerning the nature of the globe which were then debated. It must, indeed, be admitted that there is no more evidence to show that he was less qualified than the majority of his contemporaries. If his education was probably somewhat defective and perhaps acquired somewhat late in life, he had yet the advantage of having travelled more extensively than had most men and of having had abundant opportunities for discovering the opinions of a number of practical seamen. The value of such opportunities and of such travels to a man 'of great natural intelligence' is obvious, and it may appear to be safe to conclude that in all probability the opinions which Columbus entertained before his discovery of America were neither more nor less just than those entertained by the majority of the educated men of his age, that he was in fact in this respect a man of his time.

7

That any views which Columbus held before the discovery of America were less the outcome of study or of any solid reasoning on his part, than of the use which he made of such advantages as he possessed, is a conclusion which wins no little support from a consideration of the probable nature of those views, so far as that nature can be ascertained. It is clear that, at this period of his life, he believed, as did the majority of his contemporaries, in the sphericity of the globe, but it may be doubted whether his belief rested upon any very solid foundations. At a later date, his conviction on

¹ He was always extremely alarmed in rough water, or at least represented himself as being so (cp. for example, vol. ii, pp. 74, 86, 90). His knowledge of navigation was defective (cp. *infra*, p. xli).

this point was shaken or overthrown; while he continued to admit that one hemisphere was a true hemisphere, concerning the other he propounded a somewhat fantastic theory which he claimed to have derived from his own thought upon the subject.¹ It may therefore be legitimately questioned whether his earlier belief resulted from anything more profound than the fact that it was the belief held by most of those with whom he was brought into contact. It would in any case be altogether unreasonable to allege his conviction of the sphericity of the globe as an argument in support of the view that he was a man of exceptional intellectual capacity.

It would be equally unreasonable to suggest that any such argument is supplied by his apparent attitude towards the further question of the practicability of crossing the Atlantic and of circumnavigating the world. That attitude has, perhaps, been somewhat misrepresented. At first sight, it seems to be obvious that of such practicability he must have been profoundly convinced. Had he not been so, it may seem to be hard to believe that he should ever have conceived of that project which he formed and to be still harder to believe that he should have ever ventured to attempt the accomplishment of that project. Even if it be held that he designed no more than to achieve the passage of the Atlantic to some lands which he believed to lie at a distance of three hundred and fifty leagues west of the Canaries, it may still appear to be certain that he must have believed that, as he notes on a passage in the *Epilogus Mappe Mundi*, 'omnem marem sit navigable,'² and that circumnavigation was accordingly practicable, provided that no mass of land intervened. There would thus seem to be sufficient ground for including Columbus among the number of those who regarded it as being no less practically than theoretically possible to reach the east by sailing west and to regain the starting-point by means of a continuous journey in one direction. And it has been very generally supposed that such a view of his position on this question is wholly in accord with fact and that, in this respect, he was in agreement with the best opinion of his age, if, indeed, by reason

¹ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 30.

² Note 496 (*Rac. Col.* i. ii, p. 408). The Latin is that of Columbus.

of the strength of his conviction, he were not actually somewhat in advance of that opinion.

It would, however, appear to be possible and perhaps probable that this supposition is only just up to a certain point and that it does not supply an entirely accurate idea of the attitude of Columbus. There are some grounds for thinking that he should be included in the number of those who believed that, if the Atlantic had not yet been crossed, it was because its passage was divinely forbidden, because it had so far been the will of God that its mysteries should not be revealed, and not merely because either ships, adequate for such a voyage, or the requisite nautical skill, had been lacking. At a much later period of his life, Columbus claimed that he had achieved something which no other man could have achieved.¹ To suggest that he put forward this claim simply as a retort to those who belittled him or simply because he was inordinately vain, is perhaps to adopt a somewhat superficial or a somewhat cynical view. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it is hardly more than just to assume that he believed in the validity of his pretension and that he was doing no more than stating his honest conviction. It is therefore germane to any discussion of his probable opinions to consider upon what foundations he based the claim which he advanced.

It is clear enough that he cannot have intended to suggest that he was provided with ships better fitted than any other vessels could have been to accomplish so lengthy a voyage; Columbus constantly complained of the inadequacy of the means with which he was provided for the attainment of so great ends. Nor is it very probable that he wished to imply that his knowledge of navigation was such as to enable him to succeed where any other man would have failed. The age was one in which skilled navigators abounded, and Columbus can but have been aware that, in practical knowledge of maritime matters, he had many equals and perhaps many superiors even among those who sailed with him.² To have made any assertion to the contrary would have been to make

¹ 'Memorial de agravios' (*Nuevos Autógrafos* n.º 6). Cf. Las Casas i. 38.

a merely idle boast and to expose himself to legitimate ridicule. Nor is there much ground for supposing that he was in fact inclined to pretend to pre-eminence in this respect. It is true that upon occasion he appears to insist upon his nautical skill, but he does not do so with such emphasis as to suggest that he was also prepared to insist that his skill was so great as to enable him to do that which few or no others could have done. On the contrary, when he himself says that the method by which he determined his position upon one occasion was one 'which resembles a prophetic vision,'¹ he seems almost to admit that he was not an experienced navigator in the ordinary sense and to suggest that he was in possession of some knowledge other than maritime, of some capacity other than that which might also be possessed by any pilot. It may be added that he would seem to have placed no little reliance upon the practical skill of others; during his first voyage, he more than once sought the advice of Pinzón and appears to have deferred in some measure to his judgement; during his last voyage, he consulted the masters and pilots of his vessels concerning the course which should be followed.² His very assertion or boast that these same masters and pilots could not, for all their knowledge, have found again the way to Veragua, unless they had rediscovered it, reads, when taken in its whole context, like a declaration that it was not to nautical skill that he owed his success.

In the suggestion, here somewhat darkly conveyed, that he possessed something which was peculiarly his own, a clue to the basis upon which he rested his claim may perhaps be found. Columbus was undoubtedly deeply imbued with the religious spirit. It is impossible to read his extant writings without realizing that he was ever ready to perceive the finger of God in all that might come to pass. He seems to have been almost eager to convert the commonplace into the miraculous; he could divine a special dispensation of Providence in every change of weather and could see the hand of the Almighty constantly shaping the course of his

¹ 'á visión profética se asemeja esto' (cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 98). The whole of this passage, in his letter descriptive of his fourth voyage, is interesting in this connexion.

² Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 72, note 4.

life. He was very certain that nothing ever happened by chance, that the most trivial incidents of everyday existence had been fore-ordained from all eternity. Like St. Joan before him, he heard voices and saw visions; like Cromwell after him, he was profoundly convinced that he enjoyed the special protection of the Deity, that he was, as a Puritan field preacher might have expressed it, 'a chosen vessel,' ordained to be an instrument by means of which the high purposes of Heaven might be accomplished.

To such a man, it was but natural that 'the enterprise of the Indies' should appear in a somewhat different light from that in which it might appear to others of a colder and less enthusiastic temper. For others, that enterprise might be of some, and even of great, economic and political importance; for him, it was assuredly this, but it was also very much more. It was a divine mission, and he who engaged upon it was emphatically the servant of the Most High: he was labouring not merely for the temporal but still more for the spiritual welfare of mankind. As Columbus declared, in a moment of mingled depression and exaltation, it was the revelation of the New Heaven and the New Earth, spoken of by St. John the Divine, and of that revelation he was himself the apostle.¹ 'The Holy Trinity moved me', he wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella,² 'to come with this message into your royal presence.' He felt himself to be the very ambassador of God, sent forth to carry the glad tidings of salvation to those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. 'When therefore', wrote Las Casas long afterwards,³ 'the day of the marvellous mercies of God had dawned, in the which from those parts of the earth, the seed or word of life having been therein sown, there should be garnered a most abundant harvest, . . . the divine and exalted Master chose from among the sons of Adam, who in those our days were dwelling upon the earth, that illustrious and great Columbus, . . . that to him He might commit the accomplishment of a most notable and divine enterprise.' Las Casas is here expressing that which was indubitably the deep conviction of Columbus himself,

¹ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 48.

² Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 2.

³ Las Casas, i. 2.

and it is reasonable to suggest that upon this conviction was based the claim of the discoverer to have rendered to the sovereigns service such as no other could have rendered. In the light of such a belief, his claim appeared to him to be no more than just. For it was to him and to him alone that God had entrusted the carrying out of an undertaking which, as he wrote at the close of his first voyage, would bring great fame to Ferdinand and Isabella and to their realms, at the success of which all Christendom should rejoice, and through which great temporal benefits would accrue to all lands and many nations be turned to the True Faith.

His claim, upon any other assumption apparently extravagant and apparently one which would have been immediately disallowed by contemporary opinion, upon this assumption becomes one which could at least not be easily refuted or ridiculed in an age in which it was akin to heresy to question that all great achievements were the outcome of a special intervention of the Divine Providence. But if so much be admitted, the explanation of the attitude of Columbus upon the question of the practicability of circumnavigating the globe becomes somewhat different from that which has been generally advanced. It is obvious that a man who believed that he was commissioned by the Almighty to carry the tidings of salvation to the other hemisphere and to reveal a new world to mankind, must also have believed that he would be enabled to reach that hemisphere. He must therefore have equally believed that he would be enabled to cross the ocean, if only by doing so could he come to the unknown parts of the world. It does not follow that he believed that any other would be so enabled. It rather follows, from the very terms of his claim, that he was convinced that a journey, which he could perform, could be performed by no one else, since he alone was the chosen ambassador of God.

His assurance that the globe could be circumnavigated thus becomes rather limited than absolute. It appears as being based less upon study and reason, less upon knowledge of any kind and whencesoever derived, than upon his further assurance that he was entrusted with a divine mission. His belief may be justly regarded as evidence of his

deep religious fervour; it can hardly be regarded as evidence of deep learning. If it were the product of experience and of use of those opportunities afforded to him by the circumstances of his life, it was perhaps so in another sense from that in which some have supposed it to have been. It was rather the product of faith than of science. It was one which might have equally been entertained by a man whose only literature had been works of devotion and who had never emerged from the dim seclusion of a hermit's cell.

8

The opinions held by Columbus before his discovery of America can, however, have been determined by his belief in his mission only if he already entertained that belief when he embarked upon his first voyage, and that he did so may be disputed. All direct evidence for his conviction that he was 'a man sent from God' dates from a much later period of his life, and had any such idea been present in his mind when he set out upon his adventure, it may seem that some trace at least would be found in the *Journal* or in the letter in which he announced his return. At first sight it may appear to be a legitimate inference that the absence of any such trace proves the absence of any such belief, and it may, indeed, also appear that an idea, seemingly so fantastic, could but have been the product of a disordered brain. There is some plausibility in the suggestion that Columbus was led to imagine that he was entrusted with a mission because his mental balance had been overthrown, either as a result of excessive elation, born of success, or of excessive depression, born of adversity. When, however, the events of his life, from the date of the discovery down to that at which he is first known to have announced his belief, are considered, the validity of this suggestion becomes doubtful. It is questionable whether during that period he had enjoyed such success or suffered such adversity as would have sufficed to unbalance an originally normal mind. It is equally questionable whether his belief can be legitimately regarded as the product of his experiences during that same period or as an indication of an abnormal mental state.

At the present day, when the momentous consequences which have flowed from the adventure of Columbus can be fully appreciated, the success of the first voyage may seem to have been sufficiently astounding to induce a very delirium of joy. To those who then lived, that success was far less obvious and was, indeed, by no means so great as had been hoped and anticipated by those who had most cordially embraced the project. Official letters, dealing with the preparations for the second voyage, indicate clearly enough that among those who may be supposed to have been best informed, some at least deprecated any further expenditure.¹ Those who had declared the undertaking to be a delusion were far from having been put to silence; they were inclined to feel that their original scepticism had been justified and that the discovery of a few islands and of an unknown race of savages was an inadequate return for the investment made, especially at a time when, despite heavy taxation, the crown was in a condition of chronic financial embarrassment.

The satisfaction of Columbus himself was almost certainly somewhat mitigated. It is true that both in the *Journal* and in the letter concerning the first voyage, he insists upon the wealth, the fertility, and the populousness of the newly discovered lands, and it is obvious that he was impressed, and even profoundly impressed, by the novelty of all that he saw. But as evidence of his actual sentiments, these documents must be regarded with a certain measure of reserve; there is some reason for thinking that they do not represent those sentiments with complete fidelity. The letter is preserved only in an edited form,² and while the extent and nature of the editing to which it was subjected cannot be precisely determined, the tendency of that editing would appear to have been in the direction of hiding or at least of minimizing any disappointment, and of magnifying any gratification, which was felt concerning the results of the voyage. The *précis* of the *Journal* by Las Casas is not complete and the omissions may have been of vital importance. It must be

¹ Cp. the case of Juan de Soria, for which see Navarrete, ii. 89-95 (ed. 1825).

remembered that Las Casas was working upon his materials long after the event and that, since he was in a position to realize the importance and the actual success of the first voyage of Columbus, he might be almost expected to imagine that Columbus himself had fully appreciated the magnitude of his achievement and hence to ignore any statement which might seem to suggest the contrary. He was, moreover, eager to show that the first discoverers of the Indies found perfection in all things, and that this desire led him to exaggerate the good and to ignore the evil is abundantly clear from page after page of the *Historia de las Indias*, to assist in the composition of which work the précis of the *Journal* was certainly made. Nor was Las Casas by any means so conscientious in his treatment of his materials as he has sometimes been represented as having been; where his deep convictions were concerned, he was capable of *suppressio veri* and of *suggestio falsi*, and he was constantly guilty of flagrant and deliberate misrepresentation.¹ In such circumstances, his version of the *Journal* cannot be accepted as conclusive evidence of the sentiments of Columbus save in so far as those sentiments were in complete accord with the ideas of Bartolomé de las Casas.

But even if the witness of these documents could be unquestioningly received, there is still enough evidence to suggest that Columbus was very far from being wholly satisfied with the results of his first voyage. He had sought in vain for that highly developed civilization, for those mighty cities and for those powerful kings that he had expected to find. Instead, he had met only with barbarians, amiable perhaps but still barbarians, living in a most primitive condition under the dominion of a host of petty chieftains, and to describe the rude huts of Guacanagarí as constituting 'a large town'² was to indulge in something more than poetic licence. Even as he dwells upon the wonders of these lands, even as he declares that 'Española is a marvel,' he reveals his disappointment;

¹ Instances are numerous, and it may be suggested that if the *Historia de las Indias* were a less unreadable work, its reputation would be very different from that which it has enjoyed. For examples of the unreliability of Las Casas, cp. 'Las Casas as an Historian' (*Times Literary Supplement*, 15 Mar. 1928).

² Cp. *infra*, p. 12.

'I sent two men ashore to learn if there were a king or great cities . . . they found . . . no trace of ordered society.'¹ There was here little enough to produce extreme elation. Sufficient had been found, perhaps, to justify hope that more might be found, but not to give any assurance that Ferdinand and Isabella would be inclined to afford him that 'very slight assistance'² for which he pleads. Joy and disappointment, hope and misgiving, were so mingled in the mind of Columbus that it may be safely assumed that there was nothing so to disturb his mental balance that he should suddenly develop a fantastic idea of his own destiny. At no subsequent period of his life, however, did he attain any success commensurate with that which, even in his own estimation, crowned his first voyage. It must, therefore, be concluded that, whatever may have been the origin of his belief in his mission, it is not to be found in the elation of victory.

Nor can that belief be with more justice regarded as the product of the opposite extreme of feeling, as having originated from intense depression, born of adversity and driving him to seek consolation in the wild flights of a disordered imagination. Columbus was undoubtedly convinced of the reality of his mission before he had suffered any crushing blows of fortune and at a time when his hopes, if their realization were still deferred, seemed none the less to be well grounded. Of his conviction, the earliest direct evidence which has been preserved is contained in a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, describing his third voyage. 'The Holy Trinity', he writes, 'inclined your highnesses towards this enterprise of the Indies, and of His infinite goodness He made me the apostle thereof, so that, being thereunto moved, I came with His embassy into your royal presence.'³ At that moment, his position was, or at least appeared to him to be, one full of hope for the future and was very far from giving him cause for anxiety or depression.

Columbus had returned to Spain in order to meet the attacks which had been made upon him and, if his time in Castile had been one rather of stress than of rest,⁴ he seemed

¹ Cp. *infra*, p. 4.

³ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 2.

² Cp. *infra*, p. 16.

⁴ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 8.

to have succeeded in countering the hostility of those who had criticized him adversely. The unfavourable report upon his administration of Española, drawn up by Juan Aguado, had been rejected by Ferdinand and Isabella.¹ The sovereigns had renewed to him their expressions of continued favour and confidence, and since he was always ready to believe that which he wished to be true, it is probable that he regarded those expressions as being something more than mere courtesies.² He is emphatic in declaring himself satisfied with the treatment which he had received from the king and queen, and it is at least certain that he altogether failed to appreciate the strength of that hostility towards him which was presently to triumph in the appointment of Bobadilla.

If he had so found the results of his visit to Spain satisfactory, he derived still greater satisfaction from those of his voyage, which he regarded as being such as to justify the highest hopes.³ He had discovered a land, the vast extent of which he could gauge from the magnitude of its rivers, and of which he believed the wealth to be incalculable.⁴ He had found important pearl fisheries and had concluded, or at least afterwards alleged that he had concluded, an agreement with the natives, in virtue of which a constant supply of pearls for Castile would be assured. He was full of plans for the future. He proposed to send his brother to continue the work of exploration which had been begun, and he designed to establish a settlement in the neighbourhood of the pearl fisheries, perhaps as a prelude to the full exploitation of the newly discovered lands.⁵ It is clear that he was very far from expecting that the internal situation of Española would absorb his attention and effectively prevent the execution of these designs. It is even clearer that he did not anticipate that Alonso de Ojeda would be granted a licence enabling him to reap some part of that harvest which he had hoped to garner. His whole letter breathes a spirit of confident optimism. It reads as the composition of a man who

¹ Cp. Las Casas, i. 112.

² Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 42.

³ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 46; and Las Casas, i. 177.

⁴ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 8.

⁵ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, pp. 24, 50, 68.

feels that he has triumphed over a hampering opposition, that his way is now clear for the future and that complete success is at last certain of attainment. There is in it nothing to suggest that he regarded himself as the victim of an unkind fate. For the hypothesis that he was induced to believe in his mission because he had experienced strokes, whether of good or of ill fortune, which seemed to him to be exceptional and which produced in him a state of mental exaltation, there is, indeed, no real justification.

9

No such hypothesis is actually needed to explain the fact of the belief, since that belief was by no means inconsistent with his possession of a balanced mind. At the present day, it may perhaps seem to be hardly conceivable that a man should entertain a parallel conviction unless his mental equilibrium had been destroyed; it may seem that only a madman or a saint could regard himself as being directly inspired and guided by the Almighty. But the mentality of the later fifteenth century was not that of the twentieth. In that age, many were very readily inclined to imagine that the Deity was both continually forming their thoughts and continually determining their actions.

The period was one of discovery and of re-discovery, when hitherto unknown wonders were revealed and when the half-lost memory of the glories of classical times was revived. Men received a number of new, or of at least long unaccustomed, impressions; the multiplicity of strange facts presented to them produced a fever of speculation and debate, and their minds were filled with a very welter of ideas. They were thrown into a state of mental turmoil, which to some was welcome and invigorating, but which to others was so grievous as to be altogether intolerable. Some received the revelation gladly and found in it justification for the rejection of that which had been long accepted and for the flouting of authority, however respectable. They gave free rein to their passion for inquiry and discussion; that passion grew with gratification and in many cases produced a species of intellectual intoxication. Some appeared to take a cynical delight

in making a mockery of all that had been held most sacred; they appeared to be eager to burn all that they had adored and to adore all that they had burned, and to set Apollo and Aphrodite in the place of Christ and the Virgin. A wave of physical and intellectual licentiousness threatened to engulf society, and the spread of a kind of neo-paganism to render null and void the famous edict of Theodosius the Great.

By the same revelation, however, some were very differently affected; to them, it was a source not of pleasure, but of pain. If in that age there were much scepticism, there was also much credulity: superstition kept pace with enlightenment, and despite the prevalence of practical indifference and of moral laxity, the Church at no time appeared to be more secure of the obedience of her children than almost on the eve of the greatest of all revolts against her authority. There were some who, while they felt the impulse towards inquiry, were yet reluctant to yield to that impulse; moved to disbelief, they sighed for faith, and it was only slowly and sadly that they departed by one iota from that creed, religious and secular, which they had received from their fathers. 'I can do no other; God help me', is alleged to have been the agonized cry wrung from Martin Luther; the same cry might have been uttered by many who in the later fifteenth century dared, indeed, to speculate, but who, even as they did so, trembled at their own audacity. Of these, not a few sought means by which they might escape the consequences of their own daring and by which they might evade a responsibility, beneath the weight of which they dreaded lest they should be crushed. Some found the means; they attributed all their thoughts and all action resulting from those thoughts to the working of the mighty hand of God. They ascribed the ideas which they formed and by which they were distressed to divine inspiration, and the success which they attained, and by which they were not a little astounded, to some special dispensation of an overruling Providence. In effect, they conceived of themselves as so many missionaries of Heaven.

Nowhere was this readiness to ascribe all to God so general and so sincere as in Spain. That readiness, natural enough in a race by temperament religious, had been confirmed by

the events of the past history of the country, of which the long struggle against the Moors had been the central feature. It had been further strengthened by the character of the second half of the fifteenth century. During that period, Castile had sunk into a condition of apparently hopeless anarchy and weakness, from which it had been miraculously delivered. The land had been given a degree of law and order such as it had never before known, government had become efficient, and national prosperity and national power had revived. The marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, romantically effected despite all the obstacles which threatened to prevent it; their accession to two thrones, for neither of which they had appeared at birth to be destined; their triumph over a dangerous combination of foreign and domestic foes, and the establishment of unity between Castile and Aragon in place of age-long rivalry, were all events which seemed to the age in which they occurred to be attributable only to the direct intervention of the Almighty. It was, perhaps, little wonder that the belief that God watched with peculiar care over the Spanish race became increasingly strong. And when the struggle with the Moors was at last victoriously resumed, when the Sacred Office began to purge the country from the taint of heresy, that feeling was soon converted into a burning faith; the nation believed implicitly that it was chosen of God, set apart to perform a sacred mission, for which all the trials and tribulations which had been endured in the past had been sent as a preparation, to make the race worthy of its high destiny.

But if the race as a whole believed itself to be in a very special sense directed by God, so individuals believed themselves to be similarly directed; if the race felt itself to be charged with a divine mission, so individuals felt themselves to be. It is hardly too much to say that any Spaniard of that age who performed any notable act, civil or military, secular or religious, was regarded by his fellows and regarded himself as having been set apart by Heaven to achieve that which he achieved; to Heaven he owed the conception, to Heaven the execution, of that which he had conceived and executed. Such was the belief of Isabella, when she undertook

the material and moral redemption of her country ; it was only her living faith in her divinely ordained destiny which enabled her to thread her way through a very labyrinth of difficulties and to overcome every obstacle. Such was the belief of Torquemada, when he undertook the extirpation of the false *conversos* ; he was fully convinced of the sacred character of the mission which he so ruthlessly carried out. Such was the belief of those who, even while they wept, hardened their hearts, lest they might feel compassion for the Jews whom they hurried relentlessly to the coast. It was no mere expression of a formal piety when his contemporaries hailed Gonsalvo de Córdoba as a scourge of God, sent to chastise the impiety and vices of the French, or when they declared that the successful defence of Salsés was a miracle wrought by Heaven. In the eyes of their subjects it was not only to 'the enterprise of the Indies', but to all their undertakings, that Ferdinand and Isabella were 'moved by the Holy Trinity'.

In such circumstances, there is nothing surprising in the fact that Columbus should have believed himself to have been commissioned by God to execute some great design, nor does his belief argue that his mentality was abnormal. Rather, when consideration is given to the circumstances of his early life, so far as those circumstances can be ascertained or reasonably conjectured, it becomes no more than natural that he should have entertained some such conviction from the moment when he first conceived of that project which he afterwards undertook to carry out. Columbus was a man of humble birth and of little education ; it is at least possible, if not probable, that his nautical skill was small and that his interest in, and his knowledge of, the sea and maritime affairs was rather that of a trader than of a sailor. Yet he had conceived of a project which appeared to him to be, and which in fact was, magnificent, and which was, moreover, one that had at most been but vaguely conceived by any other man. He had been impelled to offer to dare that which others shrank from daring ; he had been led to believe to be possible that which many, at least, believed to be altogether impossible. From the very first, he had been assured in his own

mind that he would succeed where others had failed or were reputed to have failed, and that he would accomplish a voyage which skilled navigators seemed to have been unable or unwilling even to attempt. To him, those lands, concerning which others could offer no more than vague conjectures, appeared as clearly as if 'he had personally visited them'.¹ In all this, there was enough to lead any man in that age to perceive the very hand of God.

For a man possessing the special mentality of Columbus, there was far more than enough. He was wholly untainted by that indifference or scepticism which was so general in the Italy of his time; his temperament was rather that of a Savonarola than of a Leo X, and he was deeply imbued with the religious spirit, while there was in him a pronounced strain of mysticism. Las Casas bears witness to his piety, and this witness is emphatically confirmed by the testimony of his own extant writings. His mysticism appears most clearly in letters dating from the last period of his life, to which period also belongs the *Libro de las Profecías*, in the compilation of which he shared. But it is not therefore to be concluded that Columbus was converted into a mystic by the misfortunes which he suffered; on the contrary, it would seem to be certain enough that he was mystical by nature. That he was so is suggested by his marked attachment to the Franciscan Order,² by his especial devotion to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception,³ by his constant invocation of the Trinity,⁴ by his extreme readiness to detect the miraculous in the commonplace,⁵ and perhaps also by his use of that curious cypher signature, which has so successfully baffled those who have endeavoured to interpret it.

That outlook upon life, which was thus natural to him, can but have been confirmed by his experiences down to the time when he appeared at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella. Whether he had himself been a sailor or whether,

¹ 'Como si en estas personalmente hobiere estado' (Las Casas, i. 5).

² Cp. Las Casas, i. 32.

³ An illustration of this devotion is supplied by the names which he gave to places in the Indies.

⁴ Cp. Las Casas, i. 2.

as is more probable, he had been rather a trader, he had certainly been brought into contact with many sailors, and the tendency of those who are engaged in a seafaring life to be superstitious and to be inclined towards mysticism is notorious. When he passed from Portugal to Castile, he came into the midst of a people, to a very large number of whom a similar attitude of mind was habitual. He there associated, moreover, with the fathers of La Rabida, from whom he received both moral and material assistance, and with some of whom at least he was certainly in close sympathy. The very fact that he, 'a poor foreigner,' as he later described himself, should have won a hearing from such a magnate as the duke of Medinaceli, and that he should have been enabled to reach the presence of the sovereigns, was almost enough to prove to him that Heaven indeed favoured him.

In such circumstances, it would have been extraordinary if he had not regarded himself as being in some measure 'a man sent from God'. Had he not done so, he would have been far more truly exceptional than he in fact was; his mentality would have been more truly alien from that of those by whom he was surrounded and more truly abnormal for the age in which he lived. It was because he was essentially a man of his time, because he was the temperamental peer of Isabella or of Torquemada, of a majority of his contemporaries in Spain, that he was convinced that he had a mission from Heaven to perform. It is intrinsically probable that he entertained this conviction as soon as he had conceived, even dimly, of that project which he set out to execute, and that by this conviction his opinion concerning all the questions debated at that time was coloured and indeed ultimately determined.

This probability is the greater because there is at least some indirect evidence to suggest that, when he first laid his proposals before Ferdinand and Isabella, Columbus already regarded himself as the missionary of God. Upon that which was then in his mind, the account, given by Ferdinand

Columbus and Las Casas,¹ of his negotiations with the sovereigns throws a certain light. From that account, it is clear that he was profoundly convinced of the transcendent importance of the project of which he had conceived. The rewards which he demanded in event of success were so extensive as to seem to be altogether extravagant; of those demands, he steadfastly refused to abate one iota, and upon the terms which he had propounded from the first, he insisted to the last with a degree of firmness that seemed to be an unwise obstinacy.

It is equally clear from the same accounts that he was as profoundly convinced that secrecy was essential. He invited the sovereigns to embrace an enterprise, the exact nature of which he refused to define. In effect, he required that they should countenance and that they should furnish supplies for an undertaking, for the practicability and advantages of which he offered no evidence save the mere word of an obscure foreigner who might well be nothing more than a plausible and smooth-tongued adventurer. Although he talked with the utmost assurance of the lands which he proposed to 'discover and gain', although he insisted that he was in no doubt concerning their existence and their value, or concerning his ability to reach them, he would not indicate with any clarity the basis of his confidence. He would appear, perhaps, to have suggested that to reach these lands it was necessary to cross the Atlantic, and it is probable that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, he conveyed the impression that they were situated in the Indies; despite the efforts of Vignaud to prove the contrary, it can hardly be questioned that such an impression was formed by Ferdinand and Isabella and by some, at least, of those to whose consideration the proposals were submitted.

But even if it be admitted that Columbus explicitly stated that he designed to reach the Indies, his intentions would not thereby have been made altogether clear. 'The Indies' was a vague term, covering whatever land might lie between the eastern frontiers of Arabia and Persia and the western shores of Europe and Africa and the islands lying off the coasts of

¹ Cp. Las Casas, i. 31.

those two continents. It included Catayo and, according to the opinion of some, the dominions of Prester John; it included also those mysterious and half-mythical territories and islands, concerning which there was so much conjecture and so little knowledge. It might even be taken to cover any land, concerning which there was hardly so much as conjecture, but which might conceivably exist somewhere westward of the Canaries and eastward of the Ganges. There was thus, in any case, a lack of definiteness in his statements, and their vagueness was in all probability one cause of the initial rejection of his proposals. Since he still maintained his reticence, despite the obviously prejudicial effect which it exerted upon his prospects of success in his negotiations with the sovereigns, it is clear that he must have had some strong reason for being so secretive.

That reason can hardly be found in any fear that he would be forestalled. It is true that the Portuguese are alleged to have examined him closely concerning his ideas, to have gained a measure of information and to have made use of that information to attempt to anticipate his discovery, but even if this story, the authenticity of which is questionable, be accepted, there is in this experience itself no sufficient ground for the peculiar reticence of Columbus. The warning which he had thus received might indeed suffice to put him on his guard against being over ready to explain the exact route which he proposed to follow¹ and even against specifying with much precision the arguments upon which he based his conviction that his design was practicable. But it hardly suffices to account for his refusal to supply even such information as might be legitimately demanded by those whom he invited to support his enterprise. His secretiveness, indeed, was carried to a point at which it might well seem that it was no more than a cloak for ignorance; that he was altogether indefinite because he could not be definite, that his whole proposals were based upon nothing more substantial than conjectures as vague as those which had been put forward again and again since classical times.

Nor is it really a tenable hypothesis that the magnitude and even extravagance of the rewards which he demanded were

¹ Cp. Las Casas, i. 29.

the outcome of extreme vanity or of vaulting ambition and that his reticence was calculated, designed to create an atmosphere of mystery which might facilitate acquiescence in his demands. That Columbus was devoid of personal vanity is a contention which can be advanced only if the evidence of his own writings be entirely ignored. That he lacked ambition is an equally fallacious suggestion. He could not have achieved that which he did achieve, had he been less full of confidence in himself or had he been diffident concerning his own capacity. He would, perhaps, have ultimately achieved more and would have been delivered from some of those misfortunes which fell to his lot, had he not been ever anxious to secure his own advancement and that of his family. That he had a certain fondness for mystery is at least suggested by the silence which he preserved concerning his own antecedents, by his cypher signature, and by a certain lack of confidence in his associates which cannot be wholly explained as the result of legitimate suspicion of their ill-will.

When, however, so much has been admitted, it remains true that Columbus was not entirely devoid of commonsense and that he was not altogether blind to practical considerations. Whatever other qualities he possessed or did not possess, he had certainly some business acumen; even in his most exalted moments, he could not forget the commercial aspect of 'the enterprise of the Indies'. He was, moreover, a Genoese, and the Genoese have notoriously never been lacking in astuteness. It is clear enough that everything must have disposed him to leave himself a margin of bargaining capacity, to set his demands higher than that point at which he was actually prepared to come to an agreement. To adopt a rigid attitude must have been almost painful to a man of his character and training. Yet, if the accounts of his negotiations with Ferdinand and Isabella can be credited, and of the substantial accuracy of those accounts there is no reasonable doubt, such was precisely the attitude which he did adopt. That he refused to effect any compromise is, indeed, almost obvious from the character of the terms ultimately granted to him; it is hardly conceivable that he

should have put forward even higher demands than those which were conceded in the *Capitulations* of Santa Fé.

And if such rigidity of attitude may be regarded as surprising, the secrecy in which he enveloped his project is equally surprising. It is so probable as to be morally certain that Columbus had been for some years engaged in the buying and selling of commodities, and he must therefore have been aware of the elementary truth that it is less difficult to dispose of an article if some proof of its value be forthcoming. When, however, he laid his proposals before Ferdinand and Isabella, he seemed to be almost wholly oblivious of this commonplace of all business. Towards them and towards those who were commissioned to investigate his case, he in effect adopted the attitude of a man who demands a high price for an article, the excellence of which is guaranteed only by his unsupported assertion. It may be admitted that, in the very nature of things, absolute proof of excellence could not be produced, but Columbus appears to have made no effort to supply anything which could be regarded as evidence that his assertions were well grounded. It is true that he is represented as having exhibited to the sovereigns a map,¹ on which were indicated those lands that he proposed to discover, but even if he did in actual fact do so, it is obvious that such a map must have been conjectural and he would appear to have refrained from explaining the facts or arguments upon which his conjectures were based. His position was almost an anticipation of that of the promotor of the time of the South Sea Bubble, who invited investment in an undertaking 'but no one to know what it is'.

His conduct at this juncture, indeed, seems at first sight to have been not only alien from that which might have been expected from a man accustomed to transact business, but even alien from that which might have been expected from a man of ordinary intelligence. He asked for support in the execution of a project so indefinite that its advantages could but be dubious; he asked for a guarantee of lavish rewards in

¹ M. de la Roncière (*La Carte de Christophe Colomb*), believed that he had found this map in the Bibliothèque Nationale. His identification has been disputed and would seem to be scarcely tenable. It is, in any case, very questionable whether Columbus was, at that period, capable of drawing maps.

event of its accomplishment, but since its nature was not defined, of its accomplishment he would necessarily be the sole judge. It can hardly be supposed that Columbus failed to realize that he was thus setting in his path obstacles which might be expected to prove fatal to success, that he was putting forward a proposal which any rational man would have some difficulty in accepting. It can hardly be supposed that the unwisdom of the course which he pursued was not suggested to him by those who wished him well, or that he was not pressed to be somewhat more explicit. And since it must be believed that he desired that his propositions should be accepted, it is clear that there must have been some powerful consideration which so weighed with him as to lead him to refrain from doing what he could to render acceptance more probable.

11

This consideration must clearly have been of a somewhat unusual character, since from the material and practical point of view the attitude which Columbus adopted was one well calculated to secure his defeat. It is, however, perfectly supplied by his belief that he was the missioner of Heaven and that his project was therefore upon an entirely different plane from that upon which any human project might be supposed to be. For him, it ceased to be a scheme of his own devising; it was not the product of man's wisdom, but of divine inspiration. He had been moved to conceive of it; like David, to whom he is said to have compared *himself*, he was specially chosen to fulfil a special purpose. He was not a free agent, but the bondservant of the Most High; he could do only that which he was directed to do; he was no more than the ambassador of God.

But if he were no more, he was also no less. He was assured beforehand of the constant favour and guidance of Heaven; he was assured also of ultimate success, since the accomplishment of his mission was decreed by God and against the decree of God no opposition could prevail. The means by which his object would be achieved were, moreover,

foreordained; they were infallibly the best means, since they were divinely selected, and they would be made known to him by God Himself, upon the revelation of Whose will he could confidently rely.

A mystic rarely, if ever, fails to receive that revelation of the divine will for which he seeks and which he expects to receive; he will always tend to interpret the promptings of his own nature as the still small voice of the very spirit of God. It was almost inevitable that Columbus, believing that he would be divinely instructed, should discover that instruction in his own heart and mind. By temperament reticent and even secretive, by temperament also ambitious, he was naturally impelled to conceal his actual intentions and to demand great and even lavish rewards. He may be supposed to have had no difficulty in convincing himself that these impulses were divinely implanted in him and that if he felt any contrary impulse, suggested by practical considerations, it should be resisted as one of those temptations to which the chosen servants of God had always been notoriously exposed.

With the disposition to do so, indeed, it was sufficiently easy for him to discover grounds upon which secrecy might be imperatively demanded. He was assured that to him, as the missionary of Heaven, some part of the hidden purposes of God had been made known. The mere fact that his proposals did not win instant acceptance was almost enough to prove that from others those purposes were still concealed. Had it been otherwise, his message would have been received with alacrity; it would not have appeared, as the very faith of Christ itself had once appeared, to be 'to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness'. But since God had willed that those to whom he preached should not at once hear, it was obligatory upon His ambassador not to go beyond the terms of his embassy. He was bound to deliver only that message which was entrusted to him; he was bound not to commit the error of 'adding here a little and there a little'. To have done so would have been to display a lack of faith; it would have been impious and also vain. It would have been to attempt to anticipate the appointed time, in which the truth would surely be made known and in which his message

would be received by those whose understanding would be enlightened.

Nor could it be supposed that by reticence, the accomplishment of his mission would be in any way retarded. Had his project been of mere human devising, it might have been wise and even essential to exhibit greater candour. It might then have been advisable to produce every argument by which conviction could be carried to the incredulous, to do something more than merely insist upon the honour and glory that were to be gained and upon the spiritual and material benefits which would accrue, to propound a definite scheme in definite terms.¹ But since the enterprise was divine, and since it was the purpose of God that it should be achieved, its achievement was certain and could be neither hastened nor retarded by any human action. At the appointed time, 'the Holy Trinity would inspire' some sovereign to embrace the undertaking, that sovereign whom God had already chosen to be the recipient of His message and to reap the reward. How imperative it was that no attempt should be made to hasten that hour had, indeed, been made clear to Columbus in Portugal, if the story of the effort to appropriate his project be credited. At Lisbon, he had been illegitimately communicative and that which resulted had shown him how he had thereby incurred the displeasure of Heaven. The instinct which urged him to reticence was assuredly the whispering of the Holy Spirit, which he had momentarily allowed to be drowned by the clamorous voice of mundane wisdom. He had been mercifully warned and that warning he must not neglect, lest, like Saul, he should be rejected.

And if Columbus were thus readily able to interpret his impulse towards secrecy as being divinely implanted in him, so when he obeyed the promptings of personal ambition, he was as well able to persuade himself that he was no more than following the guidance of Heaven. For a man eager to be so persuaded, there were indeed ready to hand arguments sufficient to carry conviction. If he demanded great rewards, it was because only if such rewards were granted to him,

¹ For the arguments which he did use, cf. *infra*, vol. ii, pp. 6 *et seq.*

could the enterprise be brought to a successful conclusion. At a much later date, he protested to Ferdinand and Isabella that it was from fear lest that enterprise should be mismanaged that he was led to seek that the government of the Indies should be conferred upon himself.¹ It is probable enough that in making this protest he was altogether sincere, that he did believe that such had been his motive. It was natural enough that he should feel that he was in duty bound to endeavour to secure that the direction of the undertaking should remain in his own hands. Upon him had been laid the task of executing a great mission, the nature of which could be revealed to him alone and could not be appreciated by others. To him equally, and to him alone, would be shown the means by which the mission could be performed. In such circumstances, it was essential that he should be free to do that which he thought to be necessary and which in truth he knew to be necessary, since he was trusting not to his own judgement but to the guidance of Him Whose servant he was.

Nor could any rewards for which he might ask be justly regarded as excessive. He was the chosen means by which that monarch, who was to be moved to hear and to receive his message, was to be enabled to gain such glory and to receive such benefits as no other monarch had ever gained. It was no more than right that the man who had rendered to a sovereign services so notable should be lavishly recompensed, if only for the sake of the reputation of the sovereign himself. And by seeking a rich reward, Columbus could feel that he was also emphasizing the importance of the enterprise which he proposed and that he was avoiding the error of seeming to hold as of small price the gift of God which he offered.

Whatever he might demand, whatever he was moved to demand, would moreover be assuredly granted to him. Not only was it certain that the enterprise would be undertaken and achieved, but it was also certain that it would be undertaken and achieved by him alone, since he alone was chosen for this purpose. It was the immutable purpose of Providence that some sovereign, whether the king of Portugal or the

¹ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, pp. 106-8.

king of England, the king of France or the king and queen of Castile, would be moved to embrace the undertaking and to employ the only means by which it could be carried out. The actual or reputed failure of earlier attempts to reach the unknown hemisphere were evidence that God had willed that these attempts should not succeed. Despite every rebuff, despite all opposition, Columbus could therefore feel the most perfect confidence, assured that every obstacle would be overcome and that his efforts would end in triumph. To bargain, to compromise, was altogether unnecessary.

The steadfast confidence with which Columbus pursued his design has been remarked by all who have considered his career; it is no less obvious than the rigidity of the attitude which he adopted in his negotiations with Ferdinand and Isabella or than the mystery in which he shrouded his project. And it is the more notable since he was, as the witness of his own extant writings proves, temperamentally inclined to acute depression, temperamentally inclined to imagine hostility where none perhaps existed and to exaggerate, rather than to minimize, the difficulties with which he met. Yet there was in him also a countervailing strain of optimism, which enabled him to overcome his own nature and to entertain the brightest hopes even in his hours of darkest adversity. Columbus was indubitably filled with an intense belief in his own destiny, a belief which determined his conduct throughout his life. He was as indubitably convinced that his destiny was to perform the mission entrusted to him, a conviction which filled his mind from the very moment when he first conceived of 'the enterprise of the Indies'.

12

The suggestion that Columbus was thus filled, almost to the point of obsession, with a conviction that such was his destiny, implying, as it does, that he regarded his project as being rather of divine than of human origin, may at first sight appear to be inconsistent with those opinions which, before his discovery of America, he would seem to have held concerning the unknown parts of the world. It is beyond question that he believed that it was possible to

cross the Atlantic and that, granted that no mass of land intervened to bar the way, it was also possible to circumnavigate the globe. It can hardly be doubted that he rejected the view, held by some of his contemporaries, that the other hemisphere was nothing but a waste of waters and that nothing remained to be discovered, save a certain number of relatively insignificant islands, such as those which were already known. It is at least very probable that, on the contrary, he held that lands of no inconsiderable extent were yet to be made known and that these lands would be reached as a result of a voyage beyond the Canaries and Azores. He would further seem to have been assured in his own mind that the voyage to these unknown lands would be one of reasonable duration, and that the lands were both habitable and inhabited, that so far from their climatic conditions making life impossible for man, they were peopled by a numerous, intelligent, and civilized race, possessed of great material wealth and enjoying all the benefits of a developed and ordered society.

His opinions, so far as they can be reasonably conjectured in the absence of any decisive evidence concerning them, were thus apparently in advance of those held by a large number of educated men of his time and were also in far closer accord with actual fact. It may therefore seem to be probable, if not evident, that they must have been the product of careful thought and of the exercise of trained judgment by a man of considerable intellectual capacity. It may appear to be hardly possible that he should otherwise have formed so just a view upon debated points, unless it be supposed that he was possessed of information derived from some person or persons who had already accomplished the passage of the Atlantic and who had already visited the unknown lands beyond the Ocean. It has, indeed, been argued by those who decline to believe that Columbus was actually capable of scientific reasoning, that such is the true explanation of the origin of the opinions which he held and that he merely availed himself of the knowledge and experience of others, of information received from the mysterious pilot, from Martin Alonso Pinzón and other practical seamen.

When, however, the views of Columbus are more closely examined, it becomes clear that no such explanation is necessitated by their character, even if it be admitted, as it in all probability should be admitted, that he had not 'much book learning'. They were not in actual fact at all inconsistent with the most complete lack of scientific knowledge and of capacity for scientific reasoning. They were, indeed, precisely the views which he might be expected to hold if he were convinced that he was 'a man sent from God' to perform a certain mission, for the performance of which it was necessary to reach the other hemisphere. The substantial justice of his opinions does not suffice to disprove the verdict passed upon him by Andrés Bernáldez or to invest his project with any scientific character.

It is obvious enough that, if he believed that he was chosen by God to make known that part of the world which was unknown, he would also be enabled to reach that part, and that accordingly for him the Atlantic was navigable whether or no it were navigable for others. It is hardly less obvious that his other opinions followed naturally from this initial conviction. If the ocean extended uninterruptedly from Europe to Asia, if there were no land distinct from these two continents, there was in reality nothing to be discovered, for Catayo had been already reached and if Cipangu had not been actually reached, knowledge of it had already been gained. If it were merely his mission to find a somewhat shorter route to eastern Asia, or a route other than that for which the Portuguese were seeking, then this mission could hardly be regarded as the revelation of the New Heaven and the New Earth, spoken of by St. John the Divine.

If, however, Columbus were thus, by the very nature of his conviction, almost bound to believe that land of some considerable extent was still to be discovered, he was even more bound to believe that this land was habitable and inhabited. It would have been for him almost an absurdity to suppose that God had selected him to discover some barren and desolate tracts, to carry the gospel of salvation to sticks and stones, to noxious reptiles or to horrible monsters who could hardly have been deemed to possess immortal souls and

who were assuredly the very spawn of the Wicked One. He could but be assured that he would there find those 'other sheep', of whom Christ Himself had spoken and who were to be brought into the true fold. He was, indeed, the missionary of God; he was to prepare the way for the coming of that day when all mankind should confess the Saviour. His very name indicated his destiny; Las Casas was doubtless no more than expressing the idea of Columbus himself when he declared that not in vain was he called Christopher, since he was in very truth the bearer of Christ.¹ Columbus was inevitably compelled by his belief in his mission to believe also that the unknown hemisphere was peopled by intelligent beings, by men capable of eternal salvation.

And the more the apparent basis of his opinions is considered, the clearer does it seemingly become that this basis was rather religious than scientific, less rational than mystical. So far as he argued the matter, he argued from a false premise, although he arrived at a relatively just conclusion. Not only did he believe that the Atlantic could be crossed, but he was also assured that its passage would not occupy that length of time which many supposed that it must necessarily occupy. Since it was a fact that, sailing westward from Spain, land would be reached in less time than would have been needed to reach Catayo, Columbus had here formed a right opinion. But the grounds upon which he had done so were in all probability fallacious. In the notes, which he wrote on books which he had studied, he gives attention to every assertion that no great space intervened to the westward between Spain and the extreme East.² In a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, he insists that the world is far smaller than the vulgar suppose, and he declares that Ptolemy was mistaken when he imagined that 'he had well corrected' Marinus of Tyre on this point.³ It is not clear whether or no Columbus adopted the calculations of the earlier of these two writers in their entirety, but it is clear that he enter-

¹ Cp. Las Casas, i. 2. The same idea is found in Ferdinand Columbus (c. 2).

² Cp., for example, notes 23, 43 (to the *Imago Mundi*): note 486 (to the *Epilogus Mappe Mundi*), &c. The notes are numbered as by De Lollis (*Rac. Col.* I. ii.).

³ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 82.

tained a false conception of the area of the globe and that it was as a result of this false conception that he was satisfied that the passage of the Atlantic would not occupy an impossible length of time, even were the voyage to be extended to the very shores of Catayo.

Upon an equally erroneous basis he rested his conviction that a considerable area of land was yet to be discovered. He dwells with marked insistence upon that passage in Esdras which declares that only one sixth of the globe is covered by water, and it is clear that he accepted as accurate this estimate of the proportion between sea and land. From this false estimate, he drew a conclusion which was actually in greater accord with fact than that which had been reached by many of his contemporaries, who held that little land was still unknown. But in his view, there is nothing to suggest that he was possessed of any special intellectual capacity; it rather suggests that he was inclined to place reliance upon the statements of writers who had no claim to be regarded as scientific.

So far, indeed, as there are any indications of the basis of his opinions, it would seem that it was essentially theological. These indications are certainly not very clear. No documents, illustrating his views before the date of the discovery, have been preserved, unless the notes be assigned to that period. His assertion, that he had acquired sufficient knowledge of all sciences to enable him to perform his undertaking, is really contradicted by himself and cannot be true. Even if he were equipped with the necessary preliminary education, there is no period in his life when he can have had either the opportunity to consult the necessary books or the leisure required for their study, unless, indeed, his own statements concerning his early life be rejected as inventions and such other evidence as there is for his activities down to the time of his first voyage be dismissed as false.

There is, however, definite evidence of the sources upon which he founded his opinions later in life, and in the absence of any proof to the contrary, it may be reasonably conjectured that upon these or similar sources he had always been disposed to rely. And it is significant that he exhibits a

marked preference for works of a theological character. He does indeed refer to Ptolemy¹ and to Aristotle,² but he refers to the former primarily in order to explain that he was mistaken, while as to the latter, it must be remembered that in an earlier age Aristotle had been raised or had fallen almost to the level of a Father of the Church. Columbus certainly read and read with extreme care the tracts of Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly, and more especially the *Imago Mundi*, but while it may be admitted that this work was for him a species of text-book, its share in determining his opinions has perhaps been sometimes overestimated. Quite apart from the possibility or probability that it did not come into his hands until after his discovery of America, when his annotations upon it are examined they will be found to be in the main little more than a kind of analytical table of contents. They do not in general reveal either assent or dissent on the part of Columbus; it is noteworthy that when they do so, it is rather dissent that is indicated. Only upon one occasion in his later writings does he make use of Pierre d'Ailly³ as an authority to support his own opinions, and he then quotes him only in conjunction with other writers and lays no special stress upon the value of his testimony. On the other hand he does lay such stress upon the Vulgate and upon glosses on passages in it. Esdras is his authority for the proportion of land to water. For an explanation of the small extent of the latter, he turns to Petrus Comestor and Nicholas de Liria.⁴ He makes use, in fact, of exactly those materials of which a man of a religious and mystical temperament, who believed that his ideas were divinely inspired, might be expected to make use. His employment of them certainly lends more colour to the suggestion that he was obsessed by the idea of his mission, than that he was a man of powerful intellect and of scientific attainment.

An identical impression is conveyed by those passages in

¹ He explains that Ptolemy was mistaken concerning the shape of 'the other hemisphere' (*infra*, vol. ii, p. 30), and concerning the size of the globe (*infra*, vol. ii, p. 82).

² Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 40. He refers also to Pliny and to Averroes (*infra*, *loc. cit.*).

³ Cp. *infra*, *loc. cit.*

⁴ Cp. *infra*, *loc. cit.*

which he sets forth his views. These passages are confused and vague; there is a complete lack of clear and coherent argument, and there is nothing to indicate that any knowledge which he had acquired had also been digested. They read rather as the meanderings of a man who has somehow gathered a mass of unrelated information and who is anxious to display it without much regard for its relevancy. The mind of Columbus seems to be displayed in these passages as being not indeed disordered, but disorderly; it is the mind not of an educated but of an uneducated man, almost pathetically unaware that what seems to him to be something new and strange is to others perfectly familiar and ordinary. The very way in which, in one of his letters, he gives Ferdinand and Isabella an elementary lesson in the meaning of Castilian words¹ seems to betray the fact that his own knowledge was of somewhat recent acquisition.

The more the real nature of his opinions is considered, indeed, the less probable does it appear to be that they can have had any scientific basis, the less probable does it appear to be that Columbus was possessed of even a tithe of that scientific knowledge with which he is credited by his son and to the possession of which he himself laid claim. It becomes thus also questionable whether he can have conceived of any scientific project, whether he had formed any very clear idea of that which he proposed to achieve before he undertook its achievement. It becomes not unreasonable to suggest that he was led to embark upon his great adventure less by any knowledge, either theoretical or practical, which he possessed, than by his mystical temperament which caused him to feel that he had a great destiny and to discover in a vague idea of exploration a divine intimation of a mission which he was called upon to perform.

13

It must be admitted that at first sight it would appear to be hardly possible that, when Columbus passed the bar of

¹ ' . . . lago . . . que más de le puede llamar mar que lago, porqu'el lago es lugar de agua, y en seyendo grande, se dize mar, como se dixo á la mar de Galilea y al mar Muerto' (*infra*, vol. ii, p. 43.)

Saltés, he had no very definite purpose in his mind and no very clear objective in view. It may seem to be little likely that he should have set out upon a lengthy and perhaps perilous voyage without having some conception of what would be the probable result of that voyage, at least if successful. If he did so, he perhaps displayed a very living faith in his own destiny, but he displayed also a degree of daring which might be more justly described as criminal rashness. His conduct was, indeed, then such as to supply no small justification to those who declared that he was a madman, carried away by the vain fancies of a disordered mind. So obvious has it seemed to be that he cannot have been so devoid of that ordinary caution which might be expected to be shown by any man, that it has been generally assumed that he was inspired by a clear idea. It has been held that, even if he had not explained his intentions with any precision, his intentions were not the less precise, and that he had set before himself an objective which may, perhaps, have been actually unattainable, but which was none the less perfectly definite.

While, however, up to this point there has been general agreement, agreement has there ended, and those who have felt assured that Columbus had a clear plan in his mind have differed widely concerning the nature of that plan. That there should be such difference of opinion is natural enough and is perhaps almost inevitable, since there is little evidence, antedating the discovery, to show what purpose was in the mind of Columbus, and such evidence as there is may be variously interpreted. It is true that before he sailed, he was granted a passport or letters of credence by Ferdinand and Isabella and that from this document it appears that he was to proceed to the Indies,¹ while from the *Journal* it further appears that he was to deliver letters from the sovereigns to the Grand Khan.² Inasmuch as the Grand Khan was the ruler of an Asiatic territory, it would thus seem that the

¹ 'Mittimus in presenciarum nobilem virum Christoforum Colon cum tribus caravelis armatis per maria oceanica ad partes Indie pro aliquibus causis et negotiis servitium Dei ac fidem orthodoxe concernentibus.' A copy of the passport is preserved in the *Registro Libro de la Corona de Aragón* (Reg. 3569, f. 136).

² Cp. the *Journal*: Prologue: 21 Oct. and 30 Oct.

'Indies' must be here taken to mean some part of Asia and that Columbus was therefore dispatched on a voyage to Asia. It would accordingly seem also to be no more than reasonable to assume that it was his aim to reach the east by sailing west; his objective would appear to be sufficiently defined.

This definition, however, is more apparent than real. Too much emphasis may perhaps be laid upon the fact that the title of Grand Khan had ceased to be currently used,¹ but it would seem that his personality was somewhat indistinct and that the precise situation of his dominions was really unknown; the very title was possibly rather magnificent than explicit. It would be unwise to regard the evidence of these two documents as proving that Columbus was definitely sent on a mission to the successor of that monarch whose court had been visited by Marco Polo or of him who had sent envoys to Eugenius IV. Both these events had occurred some years before; political conditions in Asia were reputed to be very unstable, and despite the amount of intercourse between west and east, western Europe was but imperfectly informed of the revolutions of the Far East. The sovereigns, with whom caution was habitual especially in foreign relations, were most unlikely to commit themselves to expressions of friendship for a monarch who might well be found to have been dispossessed of his throne or to be involved in a precarious struggle with some foreign or domestic rival. To have done so would have been needlessly to risk the alienation of some other monarch, whose good-will might prove to be advantageous; it would have been to assume a definite political attitude without previous examination of the situation, and to impose upon their envoy an unnecessary, and perhaps a prejudicial, limitation of discretion. It is more reasonable to regard the evidence of these documents as being vague rather than definite, and the title of Grand Khan as referring not to some specific ruler, but to any ruler who might seem to the envoy to be of sufficient importance and power to be entitled to receive courteous attention from the sovereigns of Castile and Aragon.

¹ This point is emphasized by Vignaud (*Toscanelli and Columbus*).

That this is the more just interpretation of the wording of the document is indicated, if it is not actually proved, by the terms of the grants which Columbus received from Ferdinand and Isabella. In that grant, if anywhere, it might be supposed that some definite statement of the objective of the voyage would be found and that the services, for the performance of which he was to be so lavishly rewarded, would be exactly specified. So far, however, is this from being the case, that the wording of the document seems to be almost studiously obscure. 'Forasmuch,' it runs, 'as you, Cristóbal Colón, are going by our command, with certain vessels of ours and with our subjects, to discover and to gain certain islands and mainland in the Ocean Sea.'¹ There is here an entire absence of definition. The lands in question are not even described as lying towards any particular point of the compass; they might be in the north or in the south, no less than in the west; they might be part of Asia or of Africa, or of some entirely unknown continent. Only by implication was it even stated that they were unknown; had they been already known, it is hardly probable that it should be said that they were to be discovered 'by command' of Ferdinand and Isabella. But the dominions of the Grand Khan of *Marco Polo's travels were not unknown; they had been 'discovered'* centuries before, and it would, moreover, have been at once insulting to a reputedly powerful and friendly monarch and an entirely fatuous undertaking to send three practically unarmed vessels, manned by miscellaneous crews, not selected for military capacity, to 'gain' those dominions. Unless it be supposed that, for no very obvious reason, Ferdinand and Isabella were deliberately misrepresenting the mission upon which Columbus was dispatched, that mission cannot have been merely to reach the ruler of Catayo. The evidence of the passport, of the *Journal*, and of the grant made at Granada cannot then be regarded as definite concerning the objective of Columbus, and it must therefore be admitted that for the nature of that objective there is no

¹ 'Por quanto vos Cristóbal Colón vades por nuestro mandado á descubrir é ganar con ciertas fustas nuestras, é con nuestras gentes ciertas Islas, é Tierra-firme en la mar Océano' (Navarrete, ii, p. 9).

conclusive evidence dating from the period before the first voyage.

There is, however, evidence dating from a later period which, until the twentieth century, was accepted as decisive without any serious question. Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas, both of whom were apparently in a position, if any one were in a position, to know the truth, agree in declaring that the aim of Columbus was to reach the Indies by sailing westwards. Their testimony is supported by the opinion of other early writers, no one of whom appears to have doubted that such was in fact the project which had been formed. It was regarded as being more decisively confirmed by the witness of Columbus himself, whose statements, as contained in his earliest writings or as quoted by those who had access to his papers, were held to bear out this view. It was more especially pointed out that he showed much apparent anxiety to identify those lands which he discovered with the lands which had been described by those who had journeyed from Europe to the extremity of Asia, and it was contended that, as he had set out with the intention of reaching the Far East, so he died in the belief that he had realized this intention, although he had not actually established relations with the Grand Khan or with Prester John or with any other of the actual or reputed oriental monarchs.

Upon such a basis was founded the classical version of the project of Columbus. That project was regarded as simplicity itself, and his objective was considered to have been so definite and so clear as to be beyond all question. Following the accounts given by Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas, he was credited with having received a somewhat elaborate education, although it was admitted that these writers were mistaken in supposing that he had studied at the University of Pavia and there acquired 'the rudiments of letters'. Columbus was declared to have gained enough knowledge to be able to profit both from his intercourse with a number of learned men and from information which he later received from others of practical experience, the more so as he had himself made extensive voyages.

A gradual process has, indeed, been imagined by which

Columbus was prepared for the task which he eventually undertook. Las Casas¹ enumerates a number of reasons which, as he says, might have served to strengthen the conviction, already entertained by Columbus, that the east could be reached by sailing westward. The suggestion thus put forward, that the reasons operated to clarify and to consolidate ideas vaguely held, has been taken by some as being more than a suggestion. It has been supposed that the arguments, adduced by Las Casas, were actually present in the mind of Columbus. More especially, it has been held that he was influenced by the reading of the tracts of Pierre d'Ailly which became for him a kind of gospel and from which he drew substantial confirmation of his already existing conviction that all seas were navigable and that no great distance divided Spain from Asia across the Ocean. The fact that in the Azores and Madeira, and indeed generally among sailors who had made voyages in the Atlantic, a number of stories concerning lands to the west were current, served to support upon practical grounds a conclusion already reached upon theoretical grounds, the more so since in these stories there seemed to be evidence that the winds and currents had carried the products of the east to the shores of these African islands.

It was when his project was thus already fully formulated in his own mind that he received the powerful encouragement of the approval of Paolo Toscanelli. According to the accounts given by Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas,² the Florentine philosopher was approached by Columbus through the medium of Lorenzo Giraldi and invited to deliver his opinion and advice. In reply, Toscanelli sent a copy of a letter which he had earlier written to a Portuguese canon concerning the western route to the Indies and a map which he had himself drawn and which later served as the chart for the first voyage. Since the letter deals solely with the question of reaching Asia and the dominions of the Grand Khan, and since the map would seem to have indicated that no land intervened to bar the direct passage from Lisbon to Quinsay,

¹ Las Casas, i. 3-14.

² Cp. Ferdinand Columbus, c. 7. 8; Las Casas, i. 12. The intermediary is called Lorenzo Girardi by Ferdinand Columbus; Berardo by Las Casas. For his identity, cp. Uzielli, in *Rac. Col.* V. i.

it becomes obvious that the point at issue must have been the voyage to the Indies. The character of the project of Columbus and the nature of his objective are thus clearly displayed, and no room for doubt appears to remain.

This view of the question was almost universally held by those who had considered the problem until a comparatively recent date, and it would be altogether erroneous to suppose that it has been discarded. Since, indeed, Vignaud delivered his elaborate attack upon it, it has received the weighty support of that most profound Columbian scholar, the late Cesare de Lollis.¹ It is in accord with the obvious opinion of the age in which Columbus lived and of those who were personally acquainted with him. It is equally in accord with that which might seem to have been the necessary opinion of all educated men of that period. Granted that many believed that islands of greater or lesser extent lay between Europe and Asia, it can hardly be contended that any suspected the existence of the American continent, and hence, as the sphericity of the globe must be regarded as having been a recognized fact, the result of a westerly voyage could only be the eventual reaching of Asia. The debatable ground thus seems to be reduced in area; it appears to be no more than the question whether the distance to be traversed were too great to be accomplished, or whether obstacles would be encountered, such as contrary winds and currents or perils of a more obscure and fatal nature, which would effectually bar navigation, or perhaps whether the art of navigation itself were equal to the task of conducting such a voyage, in the course of which land would be so long out of sight. In such circumstances, it would seem that Columbus, if he were a man of even ordinary intelligence, could but have conceived of the project of reaching Asia and of no other, and that his objective could but have been perfectly defined. It may none the less be doubted whether the classical view is in fact just, and whether the arguments by which it has been supported are indeed as irrefutable as might appear. There is some reason for believing that, while there is in this view a con-

¹ Vignaud, *op. cit.*; De Lollis, *Disquisizione critica*; in his *Cristoforo Colombo* (ed. 1923.)

siderable element of truth, it does not represent the whole truth and that the objective of Columbus was not precisely that which it is thus supposed to have been, that while the classical view cannot be altogether rejected, it cannot be received without some modification.

14

It is sufficiently clear that the validity of this view depends at least to some extent upon the measure of credit which may be accorded to Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas, whose testimony is its primary foundation. That the accounts of the early life of the discoverer given by those two writers¹ cannot be accepted without considerable reserve is admitted even by the most convinced supporters of the traditional version of the history of the discovery. No one now seriously contends that Columbus was descended from 'that Colonus, of whom Cornelius Tacitus treats', or that 'he acquired the rudiments of letters' at the University of Pavia. That he was related to the corsairs who were known in Italy as Colombo is asserted only by those who labour to justify a particular hypothesis concerning his origin.² The statement that he served under that admiral or pirate cannot be accepted as true. Other details in the story told by Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas appear to be hardly less at variance with fact. The account of the manner in which he first arrived in Portugal is more romantic than it is probable, while that of his meeting with Felipa Moñiz is somewhat reminiscent of the story of Dante and Beatrice, and it is more likely that he resided at Porto Santo as the representative of a Genoese business house than as the son-in-law of Bartholomeu Moñiz Perestrello, who, indeed, was possibly not the father of the wife of Columbus.³ Such errors, whether they were deliberate or accidental, on the part of these two writers,

¹ Cp. Ferdinand Columbus, c. 4; Las Casas, i. 3-4.

² On the Colombos, see *Rac. Col.* II. iii; Vignaud, *Études critiques*, pp. 131-193. Ulloa (*op. cit.*, pp. 272 *et seq.*) has endeavoured to show that there was actually some relationship between Columbus and the Colombo whose real name was Casenove or Coullon: his attempt cannot be regarded as successful.

³ For the identity of the wife of Columbus, cp. Vignaud, *Études critiques* pp. 424 *et seq.* That identity is somewhat uncertain.

suffice to suggest that their account of the training which Columbus received cannot be trusted, and when that account is examined it becomes clear that it is consistent neither with probability nor with that which he himself relates, or is alleged to have related, concerning his early life, nor with the character of his extant writings.

Aristotle justly remarks that education is never easily acquired but must always be the result of painful effort, and if Columbus indeed 'learned arithmetic, drawing and painting', became an expert Latinist, and acquired 'an adequate knowledge of geometry, geography, cosmography, astronomy and navigation', he must have spent some considerable time upon the study of these varied branches of learning. It may further be legitimately presumed that, despite the fact that he was of quick intelligence and filled with a desire to learn, he had need of some instruction, and it is questionable whether even a Genoese instructor would have expended the necessary time and labour without receiving some more or less substantial payment. But Columbus was of humble parentage; his father, Domenico Colombo, was in a chronic condition of financial embarrassment, and in any case it can be safely assumed that, for a boy in such a position in life, the means for providing so elaborate an education would not have been forthcoming, even if it had been the type of education which those responsible for his upbringing would have wished him to receive. It has, indeed, been suggested that he may have acquired the rudiments of knowledge at the school which the weavers of Genoa had established.¹ But the document in which this school is mentioned dates from a period when Columbus was already in Spain, and there is no evidence to justify the hypothesis that any such school was already in existence when he was still resident in Genoa. An alternative hypothesis² that some learned priest taught him is no more than an hypothesis put forward to meet the difficulty of explaining how he acquired his alleged proficiency in various branches of knowledge. The argument

¹ Cp. Harriette, *Christophe Colomb*, i, pp. 246-7. The school is first mentioned in a document of 1486.

² Thacher, *Christopher Columbus*, i, pp. 287-8.

that his piety and theological knowledge prove that he had received such instruction is fallacious; the theological knowledge displayed in the *Libro de las Profecías* was more probably that of Gaspar Gorricio, while even to-day religion and business are the twin passions of the Genoese.

Even, however, had the means been available and the desire to use those means present, both in the mind of Columbus and in the minds of those who controlled him in his boyhood, it is difficult to imagine that he could have found the necessary leisure. The son of Domenico Colombo, and for that matter the son of any parents in straitened circumstances, would undoubtedly be set at the earliest possible moment to the task of contributing to the support of his family. If his own statement that he went to sea at the age of fourteen and that for years he was rarely off the sea be accepted as true, it is clear that he can have had few educational opportunities after he left Genoa. It is to the last degree improbable that he could have found an instructor among the crews of the vessels in which he sailed; it is equally improbable that those vessels were equipped with libraries or that he had purchased and that he carried with him a library of his own. Since Porto Santo and Madeira can hardly be supposed to have been at that time centres of learning, it is clear that such academic knowledge as Columbus possessed when he arrived in Spain must have been acquired by him either in early boyhood or while he was at Lisbon, engaged in urging the Portuguese king to support his project. That he should have learned all that he is alleged to have known before the age of fourteen argues an improbable degree of precocity, while if he gained his knowledge at Lisbon, it cannot have been as a result of that knowledge that he first conceived of his project.

There is, however, reason enough for believing that neither in childhood nor in early manhood nor, indeed, at any other period of his life, did Columbus attain that degree of proficiency which he is alleged by Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas to have attained in various branches of knowledge, or to the possession of which he himself laid claim. It may be presumed that had he done so, he would have allowed the fact to become known to Toscanelli. But the famous letter

to Martins, although it may have been written by a philosopher, was assuredly not designed to impress a man of intellectual capacity; it appeals to piety and cupidity, and perhaps to a spirit of adventure, but it does not appeal to learning or even to very acute intelligence. It is true that this letter was not written directly to Columbus, but that Toscanelli should have laboured to copy it out to forward to him argues that he had no very high opinion of his learning. An identical impression is conveyed by the second letter, which was directly addressed. It seems, indeed, that the Florentine, after having seen the communications sent to him by Columbus, had formed a low estimate of the scientific ability of his correspondent. So much is almost conveyed by a passage in the second letter; 'you cannot', writes Toscanelli, 'have perfect knowledge on this matter, save as the outcome of experience and discussion, such as I have had in abundance, and have received good and true information from men of magnificence and of great learning.' Columbus had certainly failed to produce the idea that he had himself read extensively and that he had enjoyed intercourse with a number of learned men, 'ecclesiastical and lay, Latins and Greeks, Jews and Moors, and many others of varying beliefs'.¹ It is true that he was habitually reticent, but it is fair to presume that, if he did not produce this idea in the mind of Toscanelli, it was because he was unable to do so, it was because any such idea would have been altogether erroneous.

Inasmuch as, at the date of his correspondence with Columbus, the Florentine was a man advanced in years, it would perhaps be unwise to insist very strongly upon the evidence supplied by his letters. He may have had little inclination to enter into any laborious discussion; he may have felt that he was no longer equal to the task of doing so. It may even be that his faculties were somewhat impaired and that he was thus led to write in a style which would hardly have been expected from a man of his great reputation and attainments, although, as has been justly pointed out, the philosophers of the later fifteenth century did not express themselves with that restraint and accuracy which is

¹ Cp. *Rac. Col.* I. ii, p. 79.

necessarily found in the philosophers of the twentieth century. The very fact that Columbus never alluded, so far as is known, to his debt to Toscanelli might, indeed, be taken to show that he did not regard that debt as being at all considerable, and that he was rather disappointed than gratified by the response made by the Florentine to his appeal for advice, that he considered that response as being something of an insult to his intelligence. In this case, so far from the evidence of the correspondence indicating that Columbus was lacking in knowledge, it would rather argue that the exact contrary was the case and that he was offended that Toscanelli appeared to have assumed that he was a mere unlettered sailor.

There is, however, other evidence to show that whatever may have been the opinion of Columbus concerning his own learning, that learning was certainly not profound and was probably almost non-existent. He was not merely incapable of that measure of clear reasoning which might be expected to be found in an educated man, even in that period of history, but he makes just that parade of learning which the unlearned always tend to make. Whatever he may have been at the time of the discovery, at a later date he was certainly not an expert navigator. Had he been so he would not have regarded the determination of his ship's position as being in the nature of a 'prophetic vision', nor would he have supposed that his vessels sailed rapidly northwards because they were going downhill.¹ His acquisition of other sciences than that of navigation would appear to have been equally imperfect.² His statement that La Mina lay under the equator is erroneous; his claim, if he actually put forward the claim, to have personally determined the degree cannot be admitted.³ It is at least doubtful whether he was the first to observe the variation of the compass.⁴ He further exhibited a certain preference for the more erroneous of two opinions, rejecting the estimate of the size of the world given by Ptolemy in favour of that given by Marinus of Tyre and asserting the falsity of

¹ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 98 and p. 40.

² Cp. Ferdinand Columbus, c. 4: Las Casas, i. 11: notes 22, 860, to the *Historia* of Pius II (*Rac. Col.* I. ii, pp. 294, 369): notes 16 and 234-5 to the *Imago Mundi* (*ibid.*, pp. 375, 390).

the general belief in the complete sphericity of the globe, declaring that one hemisphere was disfigured by a protuberance which he compares with a woman's nipple.

A still stronger argument against the truth of the statement that Columbus had received an elaborate education is afforded by the character of his Latinity. It is obvious that, in that age, a knowledge of Latin was the necessary basis of all other knowledge, and that without Latin it was impossible to study books upon scientific topics. The number of translations into the vulgar tongues was limited, and was for practical purposes confined to such learned works as had been originally written in Greek; the number of new learned works composed in any language save Latin was extremely small. Las Casas, following João de Barros, credits Columbus with being a proficient Latinist¹; if he were proficient, the standard of proficiency must have been excessively low. In his notes, written in what purports to be Latin, he displays a degree of ignorance of grammatical rules, or a disregard for those rules, which would almost have put Gregory of Tours to shame.² It is, of course, true that not every one who has been well able to read Latin has also been able to write it, and the occurrence of even elementary blunders in composition does not necessarily prove inability to understand the language. But the errors of Columbus are so numerous and so grave, his prose is so barbarous, that it becomes difficult to believe that he can have received any real education, especially in an age when the writing of Latin was so general and when ability to compose, at least respectably, in that language was so widespread as to be almost universal among educated men. His Latin is further disfigured by a number of Castilianisms,³ which serve to suggest that his knowledge of the language was acquired in Spain or while in a Spanish atmosphere.

There are, indeed, rather more arguments in favour of the view that Columbus was illiterate when he left Italy, and even

¹ The same statement is made by Oviedo (ii. 2).

² The subject of his verbs is constantly in the accusative, the object in the nominative case; a plural subject is frequently followed by a singular verb, &c.

³ Columbus constantly uses the Latin accusative as a nominative, when the accusative is the Castilian noun: e.g. 'fluvios' for 'fluvii', &c. He employs 'habet' in the exact sense of the Castilian 'hay', &c.

to a comparatively late period of his life, than there are in favour of any contrary view. All the balance of probability is against the truth of the assertion that his training in youth was such as to enable him to form a scientific conception of the enterprise which he projected. The account given by Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas may be dismissed as the result of misinformation or of faulty deduction from the known fact that Columbus did cross the Atlantic and discover a 'new world'.

15

Those who have held that, when he set out upon his first voyage, Columbus did so with Asia as his clearly defined objective, have not, however, depended for the justification of their view wholly, or perhaps even principally, upon any assumption that he was equipped with some scientific knowledge. On the contrary, they have argued that, holding such opinions as he is admitted to have held, he could have had no other aim in view. It is not disputed that he believed in the sphericity, although perhaps not in the perfect sphericity, of the globe, and of this belief the natural corollary is that a continuous westerly voyage must lead back to its starting-point by way of the east. Such a journey, or, at the very least, a westerly journey of great and indeed of indeterminate length, Columbus certainly proposed to make. It would appear to follow that, granted the supposition that no mass of land intervened to bar the way, he must have necessarily contemplated reaching the extremity of the known Asiatic continent or those Asiatic countries which lay beyond that known extremity. It was merely logical that this should be his objective; it was moreover very natural, when the deep interest felt by his contemporaries in the Indies is remembered. A conviction that this was both his desire and his deliberate intention does not involve acceptance of the statements of his son and of Las Casas concerning his early training; it involves no more than the assumption that he was a man of sufficient intelligence to recognize the implications

of his own ideas concerning the shape of the world and that he accepted those implications.

This argument is undoubtedly weighty; it is not, however, entirely conclusive. The operations of an untutored mind are not invariably guided by the rules of logic. They are perhaps least likely to be so guided when that mind is naturally active and when it is further assailed by a number of new facts and required to assimilate a number of strange impressions and of unaccustomed ideas. Few, if any, will deny that the mind of Columbus was active, and even extremely active; it is certain that to it were presented new facts or supposed facts, new impressions and new ideas. The age was one in which, not 'ex Africa' alone, but 'ex Asia' and even 'ex Europa', 'aliquid semper novi'. Never, perhaps, has there been a time when a greater variety of new impressions were received or when there was a greater riot of conjecture. Men were seemingly called upon suddenly to exercise faculties which, since the decline of scholasticism, had lain almost dormant; their minds were excited, amazed, confused; intellectually, 'they reeled to and fro, and staggered like a drunken man'.

If, then, it be admitted that the mind of Columbus was untutored as well as active, it is far from inconceivable that he should have been unable to grasp fully the logical consequences of opinions which he had adopted. Had he been taught to reason and to think systematically, had his views been formed as a result of such reasoned consideration, it may perhaps be true that he would have appreciated those consequences. But if he had ever been so taught, the teaching had seemingly been of little profit, if the evidence of his own extant writings may be accepted. It is only necessary to read the letter which he wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella at the end of his third voyage, to see that then at least he was so completely a prey to mental turmoil that he was unable to think clearly or to express the results of his thoughts with any coherence. There is nothing to show that the capacity, which was then lacking in him, had been possessed by him before he discovered America, and any supposition that it had been is illegitimate. Every indication of his mentality that can be found suggests that, if he were in some measure

endowed with genius, that genius was on the borderland of insanity. Inasmuch, however, as his actual sanity is hardly in question, it is more reasonable to suppose that throughout his life his mental processes were somewhat confused, that they were those of an uneducated man of active mind, whose defective training made it difficult or impossible for him to set in order the ideas which he had derived from that which he had seen and heard.

When the character of the subject upon which his thoughts were concentrated is considered, it must be recognized that it is little surprising if those thoughts tended to become so riotous as to be beyond his control. At the present day, when the crossing of the Atlantic is a trivial undertaking, accomplished by thousands upon thousands every year, it is somewhat hard to realize how vague and how pregnant with mystery the western ocean appeared to be to the mind of the later fifteenth century. It was then not long since even to venture out of sight of land was to perform a feat of daring, willingly attempted only by the bravest or the most foolhardy. To sail boldly out into that vast and unknown expanse of water which lay beyond the western shores of Africa and Europe demanded an exceptional degree of courage or recklessness, or a very lively faith. The Atlantic was not uncommonly believed to conceal dangers, the very nature of which could not be even dimly comprehended, but conviction of the reality of which sufficed to make it a matter of some difficulty for Columbus to gather together the small band required to man the three vessels for his first voyage. At the present day, moreover, the world has been and is being constantly circumnavigated, and there is no room for rational doubt concerning its shape and size, but in the age of Columbus there was such room. It was not then felt to be by any means certain that circumnavigation could be accomplished. It was then possible to believe that in actual fact the globe was shaped like a pear, elongated in one part to an indeterminate extent, and it was indeed also possible to conceive that it might have any other form, consistent with the admitted sphericity of one hemisphere. The potentialities of such a voyage as Columbus proposed seemed, indeed, to that

age to be not merely those which, in the light of modern knowledge, they are known to have been; they appeared to be really incalculable.

It can hardly be doubted that to Columbus himself those potentialities did appear to be vast beyond all imagining. It has been pointed out that of the passages in the Vulgate which impressed themselves upon him, there is one which seems to have been continually in his mind: 'the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork.' He was prepared at all times and in all places to see that glory and to recognize that handywork; he was ever ready to perceive marvels where others could perceive none and to believe that he was encountering the miraculous. Mystical by nature, he was carried away by the very grandeur of his own conception of a voyage which none had accomplished and which few, if any, had even dared to attempt. Profoundly assured that success awaited him, ever feeding upon those jealously guarded thoughts which burned in his untutored brain, his very reticence led him to avoid that frank intercourse with others which might have brought him to a more rational frame of mind. Convinced that in a very literal sense 'the stars in their courses fought against' the Siseras who opposed him, recognizing, in every slight advance which he made, the working of the mighty hand of God, daily becoming more certain that he was predestined to greatness, it was no more than natural that he should come to expect that he would find rather the utterly unexpected than that which might have been anticipated. Such a man, and above all such a man in such an age, was almost bound to believe that the hidden mysteries of the ocean were indeed wonderful and that when he penetrated them he would reveal to man, not a new route to the Indies, but 'the New Heaven and the New Earth,' spoken of by St. John the Divine'. His belief in the sphericity of the globe was, in such circumstances, little likely to affect his conception of that which would result from his enterprise. That belief was, after all, probably no more than a modified belief, held only because others held it: he perhaps never found it to be in-

was not spherical. The argument that his conception of the world must have led him to design to reach Asia, because that was what he might have been naturally supposed to have designed, ignores the peculiar mentality of the man, and its force is far more apparent than real.

If it be admitted, indeed, that Columbus was either unable to see or unwilling to accept the logical consequences of his belief in the sphericity of the globe, or that he held this belief only in a modified form and as a species of working hypothesis, much that has been adduced to support the classical version of the story of the discovery loses something of its value and even of its relevancy as evidence. It has been argued that the letters of Toscanelli prove that Columbus had formed the design of reaching the east by sailing west, and the apparent force of this argument may be gathered from the fact that Vignaud felt it necessary to counter it by endeavouring to show that the correspondence was a fabrication. But an impartial consideration of the letters suggests that their importance as an indication of the ideas of Columbus has been exaggerated. It may be questioned whether they actually supply any clear indication of those ideas.

It is of some importance to remember that in the first instance, at least, Columbus did not communicate directly with Toscanelli, but did so through the medium of a certain Lorenzo Giraldi. There is accordingly an initial possibility that his intermediary failed to represent his ideas correctly; if those ideas were inconsistent with current beliefs concerning the globe, it is obvious that Giraldi was little likely to have been able to understand them or to have realized that such ideas could be seriously entertained. Quite apart, however, from any possibility of this kind, there is an inherent improbability in the suggestion that Columbus opened his heart to his intermediary, since he would not afterwards do so to Ferdinand and Isabella when there was far greater reason for candour on his part. There is thus some ground for thinking that the first communication to Toscanelli was vague and general, amounting to no more than an expression of a belief that a westerly voyage would result in the attainment of considerable spiritual and temporal advantages. The

reply of the Florentine does not in itself suggest more than that Columbus had invited his opinion on some such suggestion, since that reply is really no more than a copy of an earlier statement of his own view on the matter. Indeed, two passages in that part of the letter of Toscanelli which is not a mere transcript of his letter to Martins seem to indicate that the message from Columbus had been vague; reference is made to the land of spices, which might be taken to mean the Indies, and to 'Antilla', and it almost seems as if the writer were not sure whether Columbus desired to reach the one or the other, or perhaps that it was the opinion of the writer that he was being invited to say what would be reached by a man who had merely a vague idea of a westerly voyage.

Nor is much more light thrown upon the nature of the objective which Columbus had in his own mind by the second letter, in which, since it was written directly to him, it might be expected that such light would be found. Toscanelli states that he has received the letters of Columbus and seen that he wishes to sail westwards 'into the parts of the east', but he adds, in effect, that his correspondent cannot be expected to understand what would result from this voyage. Here again the suggestion is that the communication which the Florentine had received had been vague, to the extent of creating the impression that its author was a man of limited intelligence and of still more limited education, adventurous and enterprising and a practical sailor, perhaps, but not mentally capable of formulating any clear idea. Such an impression was not improbably the impression actually conveyed. If, as is rather more likely than not, Columbus was at this period unable to write, he must have entrusted the composition of the letter to another. Even if he were able to write, it is morally certain that he was unable to write in Latin or Italian,¹ and hence must have employed an amanuensis to conduct his correspondence with Toscanelli. His habitual reticence would assuredly have operated here to lead him to refrain from being at all explicit, with the result that the Florentine could do no more than conclude that he had some thought of possibly reaching Asia.

¹ Cp. *supra*, p. xxxvi, notes 2, 3.

That it was not this thought which was predominant in the mind of Columbus is somewhat forcibly suggested by the fact that he makes no reference to Toscanelli and that he acknowledges no debt to him. This fact has not been satisfactorily explained by those who admit that the letters are genuine and who hold that the debt was of some considerable importance. There is no justification for the suggestion that Columbus was actuated by vanity or jealousy. His extant writings prove that he was not unwilling to acknowledge such obligations, and it would seemingly have been a source of no little pride to him that he, an unknown stranger, should have aroused the interest and secured the approval of the foremost philosopher of the age. Nor could the recognition of his debt detract from his own merit. From the very evidence of the correspondence itself, the idea had been present in his mind before he placed himself in communication with Toscanelli, who did no more than confirm that idea. If, however, it were the deliberate intention of Columbus to reach the Indies, if that were his real and considered objective, he did derive assistance as well as encouragement from the Florentine, who supplied him with a map which has been declared to have served as the chart for the first voyage. His silence concerning the correspondence thus becomes either inexplicable or discreditable.

But it can be explained, and explained without any reflection upon the honesty of Columbus, if in actual fact he did not essentially design to reach Asia—if he conceived, not indeed clearly but vaguely, that something far greater would be the outcome of his voyage than the mere discovery of a new route to the Indies. In such a case, his debt to Toscanelli becomes negligible if, indeed, it does not cease to exist. He had invited the Florentine to express an opinion upon that which would be the result of sailing westwards; the answer, so far from affording encouragement, was somewhat disheartening. It appeared to show that there could be only one result, that between Europe and Asia lay nothing but water and some relatively unimportant islands, and that any hope which he might have entertained of discovering anything in the nature of 'a New Heaven and a New Earth' was, in the

opinion of the greatest living philosopher, altogether illusory. Nor did a second appeal produce a more satisfactory answer; Toscanelli was convinced that the end of the projected voyage would be the attainment of those lands of which Marco Polo had written and which he and other travellers had already visited. The great mission, entrusted to Columbus by God, forthwith fades into insignificance; it is nothing more than the finding of a way to the already known. His dream becomes no more than a dream; that he had ever believed it to be rather a revelation from Heaven almost proves that he lacked experience and the necessary intercourse with men of learning. The sole result, indeed, of his reference to Toscanelli was thus to induce doubt rather than to intensify belief, to undermine rather than to increase confidence. In such circumstances, to have recalled the correspondence would have been to recall an episode, the memory of which was bitter; to have acknowledged a debt would have been to acknowledge something which he did not feel himself to owe. It is admitted that it was not to Toscanelli that Columbus owed the original conception of his project; it may be reasonably contended that he did not owe to him any confirmation of his resolve. The letters of Toscanelli cannot be regarded as affording any real support to the classical version of the story of the discovery. They indicate, indeed, that which the Florentine believed that Columbus proposed to do, but they indicate no more, and it is at least possible that the belief of the Florentine was altogether erroneous.

Nor can such arguments as are derived from the annotations written by Columbus on the tracts of Pierre d'Ailly be regarded as more conclusive. Those tracts, which are generally known by the name of the first and most important among them, the *Imago Mundi*, were printed by John of Westphalia at some uncertain date.¹ It has been held that the volume was produced some nine years before the discovery of America; it has also been held that it was not produced until some five or even until some two years before that event. Between these conflicting opinions, no certainly just choice can be made, but if the later date be accepted, it

¹ Cp. Thacher, *op. cit.* ii, p. 341, note 2.

becomes clear that it is improbable that the book should have penetrated to the Spanish peninsula before Columbus had elaborated his ideas at least sufficiently to lay proposals before Ferdinand and Isabella, and certain that in any case it did not serve to lead to the first conception of the project.

But however this may be, there are other reasons for thinking that the annotations, whether upon the tracts of Pierre d'Ailly or upon other works, do not antedate the discovery of the New World. It is true that De Lollis¹ has contended that the mere fact that in those annotations, while there are references to the discoveries of the Portuguese, there is no trace of any reference to those of Columbus himself proves that the latter had not yet been made. When, however, the character of the notes is considered, an explanation of the omission appears. It is abundantly clear that they are not intended to add to the information contained in the texts; out of a total of more than two thousand five hundred, only five make any reference at all to recent voyages, and of these four were in all probability written by Bartholomew Columbus,² while the fifth,³ which mentions the frequent journeys of Columbus to Guinea, does so only incidentally and because it was during those journeys that he came to the conclusion that the estimate of a degree by Alfragan was correct. The overwhelming majority of the notes seem at first sight to be nothing more than aids to memory or a guide to the contents of the works annotated. But while they may well be this, they appear to be something more.

It is clear that they should be considered in conjunction with the other writings of Columbus, and they bear an almost obviously close relationship to the *Libro de las Profecías*.⁴ Of that work, the intention was certainly to collect passages which seemed to show that the discovery had been divinely foretold, that the 'unknown hemisphere' was to be revealed, and that great spiritual benefits would be gained by the preaching of the Gospel to peoples hitherto sunk in the darkness of heathendom. Upon more than one occasion,

¹ Cp. De Lollis, *Cristoforo Colombo*, pp. xx et seq.

² Notes 2, 6, and 860 to Pius II: note 23 to *Imago Mundi*.

³ Note 490, to the *Epilogus Mappae Mundi*.

⁴ Printed by De Lollis [*Scritti: Rac. Col. I. ii*, pp. 73-160].

Columbus insists that such benefits would accrue from 'the enterprise of the Indies' and that the support of that enterprise was accordingly a religious duty. But whenever he so insists, he insists also upon the temporal advantages which will be secured. Here would seem to lie the purpose of the numerous annotations. In the *Libro de las Profecías* the Vulgate and the Fathers of the Church were called upon to testify to the justice of his spiritual claim. In the annotations, authors of repute, and above all a Vicar of Christ and a Cardinal, were called upon to testify to the equal justice of his temporal claim, to bear witness to the incalculable riches of those same unknown lands which were to supply so wonderful a harvest of souls. 'It was necessary', Columbus tells Ferdinand and Isabella, 'to insist also upon the worldly gain;' ¹ to show to those who might be indifferent to the hope of saving from eternal damnation myriads of souls, that the enterprise promised wealth beyond that of Solomon, and to ensure that those, whom piety could not move to support the prosecution of the undertaking, might be led to do so by their cupidity.

In such circumstances, however, and for such a purpose, it would have been of no avail to refer to his own discoveries, for those whom he wished to convince were already determined to disbelieve his word and had given their adherence to those who declared that he had been guilty of gross deception. Every assertion which he might make concerning the character of the lands which he had found would be countered by the assertions of those who had returned 'with faces as yellow as the gold which they sought', or who while still in Española had used as their strongest asseveration, 'As I hope that God will bring me back to Spain!' It was essential that he should call upon witnesses who could not be suspected of bias, and accordingly he laboured to find in those books which he read the evidence of which he was so greatly in need, if his undertaking were not to be abandoned. That evidence is, as it were, underlined by means of the notes, which are the materials upon which Columbus will base his answer to those who have defamed the Indies. It thus becomes

¹ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, p. 2.

probable that these materials were prepared only when the process of defamation had begun, and that they can but dubiously be held to throw any light upon the opinions which he entertained before he set out upon his first voyage.

16

More substantial evidence for the opinions of Columbus at the time of the discovery is, however, supplied by the two documents which describe his first voyage and its results. In those passages in the *Journal*, which are declared by Las Casas to be the actual words of the admiral, there is much to suggest that Asia was the objective sought. In the prologue to that document, it is explicitly stated that Columbus was dispatched by Ferdinand and Isabella to those lands of which he had spoken to them and in which resided the Grand Khan, the successor of that monarch who had asked the Pope to send teachers of Christianity to him. Other passages indicate that when Columbus had reached the New World, he believed that he was in the neighbourhood of the Asiatic continent. On hearing of Cuba, he thought that it must be Cipangu; he interpreted the stories of Carib raids as proving that the islanders were at war with the Grand Khan. The whole of the *Journal*, indeed, suggests that he was convinced that the lands which he had reached were those of which Marco Polo had written. The evidence of the *Letter* points to precisely the same conclusion. Columbus says definitely that he has reached the Indies; he does not even hint that he has been to any other part of the world, and he does express himself as being assured that a lucrative trade can be opened by way of Española with the dominions of the Grand Khan.

These documents, in their original form, were exactly contemporaneous with the discovery. When, therefore, their evidence is considered in conjunction with that of the letters of credence granted to Columbus before his departure by Ferdinand and Isabella, it seems to be merely perverse to contend that no thought of reaching the east by sailing west was entertained by those who sanctioned, who organized, and who participated in the first voyage. It cannot really

be questioned that such a thought was in the mind of Columbus himself. The suggestion of Vignaud that the statement that the Indies had been reached does not mean that there was any idea of reaching them when the voyage began appears to be hardly worthy of a writer of such undoubted scholarship.

The *Journal* and the *Letter* may, in fact, be legitimately regarded as proving that when he left Palos, Columbus did consider that he might reach Asia and that, when he did find land, he concluded that he was at least in the neighbourhood of Cipangu, if not in that of Catayo, despite the absence of those evidences of advanced civilization and of abounding wealth which he had been led to expect that he would there encounter. To this extent, they throw light upon the nature of the objective which he set before him. That light, however, is perhaps somewhat imperfect. It reveals something of that which was in the mind of Columbus; it may be questioned whether it reveals all that was in his mind. It would be dangerous to argue that these documents prove that the aim of Columbus was simple, clear, and determinate.

It would seem that it has sometimes been half forgotten that neither the *Journal* nor the *Letter* exists in its original form and that both have been subjected to editing, the extent and nature of which cannot be really ascertained. It is, however, clear that they do not possess that degree of authority which would attach to the originals, and least of all have they that degree of authority which would attach to originals in the autograph of the discoverer. Some caution, whether much or little, must be exercised in using these documents; at least, their evidence has that element of dubiety which is inseparable from a copy which is admittedly not absolutely exact. The suspicion which must be felt should further be perhaps felt most strongly when the documents seem most satisfactorily to solve the problems for the attempted solution of which they are employed.

So far as the *Journal* is concerned, the need for caution is indeed obvious, and to some part of the evidence derived from it very serious exception must be taken. It is only in the prologue that the purpose of the voyage is definitely stated, and

the prologue has been justly regarded as highly suspect. It is not found in the *Historie* of Ferdinand Columbus, who would appear to have been unaware of its existence. It is marked by some anachronisms and it was certainly not written at the date at which it purports to have been written. There occur in it, moreover, two peculiarly suspicious phrases. Ferdinand and Isabella are addressed as 'king and queen of the Spains', a title which formed no part of their regnal style and which they are said to have deliberately refrained from assuming. It may be argued that Columbus was a foreigner and that he was so impressed both by the victory gained over the Moors and by his own achievement, as to confer upon the sovereigns a title which seemed to him adequately to describe their greatness. This argument, however, is no more than hypothetical; it cannot be regarded as conclusive and it would appear to be somewhat unsatisfactory, since upon no other occasion does Columbus use any such title. It would seem to be more probable that the phrase is an interpolation. Even more suspicious is the appearance of the name, 'Cristóbal Colón'. Columbus makes use of his name upon no other occasion; it is extraordinary that he should do so here, and it would appear to be far more credible that the text is corrupt or falsified than that upon this solitary occasion he should have departed from a rule which he otherwise scrupulously observed.

There would, indeed, seem to be some ground for suggesting that the prologue is a fabrication, were it not that it is difficult to suggest a fabricator. The copy of the *Journal*, used by Las Casas, was possibly in the possession of Luis Columbus, who was doubtless as capable of committing forgery as of committing bigamy. It is, however, hard to believe that he, a careless polygamist and voluptuary, should have had the energy and application required for the performance of such a task, in view of the fact that no pecuniary advantage was to be gained from it. It is equally hard to believe that the copyist, whether working upon the original or upon a copy of that original, should have gratuitously added the prologue, unless it be supposed that he suffered from a species of obsession which impelled him to give a more perfect literary form to the

document. The last possible fabricator would appear to be Las Casas, in whose autograph alone the prologue exists. It is true that the explanation there given of the primary purpose of the first voyage exactly coincides with the thesis of the *Historia de las Indias*; it is also true that to the literary style of that work, the style of the prologue bears an almost unfortunate resemblance. It cannot really be denied that Las Casas was always ready to economize truth in that which he conceived to be a good cause and that he was not over scrupulous in his use of his materials. But it has yet to be shown that he was capable of deliberate forgery, and in the absence of any evidence that he was so capable it would be unjust to charge him with fabrication in this particular case. It might, indeed, be rash to assert that the prologue is not authentic, but its authenticity is certainly dubious; it can be unhesitatingly declared that it is, as De Lollis described it, 'sospettoso.'¹ But this being so, its witness is also suspect.

Even the witness of the body of the *Journal* cannot be unhesitatingly received. It is highly improbable that either Ferdinand Columbus or Las Casas ever even saw the original; they certainly did not possess it, and the précis made by the latter was from a version which had been edited and which was perhaps no more than a copy of a copy of the original. When, therefore, Las Casas states that a passage is in the exact words of the admiral, he can mean no more than that he has here copied his material verbatim; he had no conceivable means by which he could determine whether or no the version before him adhered strictly to the original. It may have so adhered; it equally may not.²

There is further the strong probability that the précis is coloured by the prejudices of Las Casas, as are the abstracts of documents which he gives in the *Historia de las Indias*. He may give complete texts faithfully, but he was an adept at selecting just those phrases which supported the point of view that he so earnestly laboured to elaborate. Nor is there any guarantee

¹ De Lollis, *Cristoforo Colombo*, p. xxvi.

² For a masterly discussion of the *Journal*, cp. De Lollis (*Scritti: Rac. Col.* I. i, pp. v-xxiii).

that the 'ipsissima verba' of Columbus are preserved in the *Letter*; there are no means by which the fidelity of the editor-copyist to the original can be demonstrated.

On the contrary, there is some reason for thinking that, in their extant form, both the unabridged portions of the *Journal* and the *Letter* differ very markedly from the lost originals. At a much later date than that of his first voyage, Columbus declared that he had always been very conservative in his estimate of the value of his discoveries and that everything which he had said concerning them had proved to be true. It is no more than necessary to read a few sentences in either of these two documents in order to find a number of palpable exaggerations and a number of statements which are the reverse of restrained. It is possible that Columbus forgot that which he had said in the first enthusiasm of discovery; it is possible that his later statement was a deliberate lie. But if these two possibilities be dismissed, the passages in question cannot now exist in their original form. It must be supposed that some qualifying phrases have been omitted; that the vigour of some phrases has been intensified. It must be supposed that the documents have been so edited as to overstate the opinion of Columbus concerning the character of the lands which he had discovered and to exaggerate his estimate of their excellence. If, however, to this extent, these documents misrepresent his actual views, it is not unreasonable to suggest that they do so in other respects and that in general the editors exercised a somewhat wide discretion in their treatment of the materials upon which they worked.

That they did so appears to be indicated by another consideration. There is a marked difference in the literary style of the unabridged passages of the *Journal* and of the *Letter* and that of such documents as are regarded as being preserved in the exact form in which they were composed by Columbus. In the latter, the admiral is generally vague, wandering, obscure; Las Casas himself draws attention to the difficulty of understanding exactly what it was desired to convey. On the other hand, the *Letter* is almost a model of clarity; if it be admitted that the materials might have been rather more systematically arranged, there are no obscure sentences and

the meaning is not open to diverse interpretations. In the *Journal*, there is certainly a wealth of repetition, but it is really inevitable repetition, and here again, even in the most lengthy quotations, there is no serious dubiety. This notable dissimilarity between the style of these documents and that of documents of a later date, indeed, almost suggests that they were of different authorship. It is possible, perhaps, to account for the variation by the supposition that the mind of Columbus was adversely affected by the events of his life after the discovery, that he became mentally confused and that his mental confusion was reflected in his writings. For this supposition, however, there is no substantial justification, and since it cannot be denied that the early documents have, to some extent, been edited, it is rather more reasonable to attribute their greater clarity to this fact.

It is, indeed, rather more probable than not that neither document was actually composed by Columbus. There are reasons for questioning whether he was, at that period, able to write; if it cannot be proved that he was unable, it cannot be proved that he possessed the ability. There is no evidence at all that either the *Journal* or the *Letter* ever existed in his autograph. The statement which has been made that day by day, or night by night, he set down the occurrences of the first voyage is not supported by anything more substantial than the suggestion contained in the suspicious prologue and the fact that such was apparently the opinion of Ferdinand Columbus and of Las Casas, neither of whom was present and neither of whom makes an explicit statement to this effect. For the somewhat romantic accounts of the circumstances in which the *Letter* was written, there is no foundation at all.¹ It has, indeed, been merely assumed, without proof, that Columbus wrote this document with his own hand. When the variation of style is taken into account, it becomes perfectly probable that the admiral merely supplied verbally materials which were reduced to writing by a clerk.

In view of these circumstances, it is obvious that the possibility and even the probability of imperfect representation or of misrepresentation of the opinions of Columbus is very

gréat. There is no guarantee that the copyists of the originals were accurate; since these copyists were rather editors, even the semblance of such a guarantee disappears. If even the originals themselves were the actual production of a clerk, there is a further opening for misrepresentation. In the process of giving literary form to dictated materials, changes of sense and variations of meaning would be far more likely than not to occur. If, in actual fact, Columbus gave expression to views not in accord with those generally entertained, it is clear enough that a clerk might have failed to grasp his meaning or might have deliberately abstained from incorporating such views in documents which he knew would probably come to the notice of some who were already inclined to regard Columbus as a madman. And finally, even if it be admitted that the originals were in the autograph of the admiral and that in the form in which the documents have been preserved editing has been of the slightest description, his reticence makes it very improbable that either in the *Journal* or the *Letter* he should have laid bare his soul. He had not done so when there was reason for so doing; there was now no such reason. The mere fact that he still awaited confirmation of the grants which had been provisionally made to him at Granada would serve to urge him to more than usual caution, since in all ages the word of princes has been notoriously unreliable and their ingratitude proverbial; to have revealed all, while his position was as yet insecure, would have been needlessly to have risked deprivation of the fruits of his discovery. If, as is possible, he suspected Martin Alonso Pinzón of designing to supplant him, he had, moreover, an additional reason for reserve.

The light which these two documents throw upon the question of the objective of Columbus is thus less fully illuminating than it might appear to be and than it has been regarded as being. It does indeed suffice to show that the idea of reaching the east by sailing west was present in the mind of the admiral; it does not suffice to show that this idea dominated him to the exclusion of other ideas. There is nothing to prove that Columbus set out with one clearly defined objective before him, save in so far as it was his

intention to sail continuously westward until some land was reached. The classical view of his purpose is assuredly not disproved. It must be admitted to contain at least part of the truth. But it seems to be equally true that it cannot be legitimately stated with that assurance with which it has been urged. An impartial consideration of the evidence upon which it rests appears to show that some measure of revision is necessary and that dogmatism is misplaced.

17

That Columbus did not embark upon his first voyage merely with the idea of finding a new route to the Indies is clearly indicated by the terms of the two documents which embody the demands addressed by him to Ferdinand and Isabella and the grants made to him by the sovereigns. From these documents, it is evident that his purpose was not simply to reach Cipangu and Catayo, but that some other thought was in his mind. The exact nature of that thought is, indeed, not revealed; the documents do not, as they might perhaps have been expected to do, state with any approach to precision the objective of the proposed expedition. But upon the character of that objective they would seem to throw not inconsiderable light, and when they are considered in connexion with other available material, they perhaps make it possible to form a reasonably accurate view of that which was in the mind of the discoverer when he set out to discover.

It is true that the original text of the *Capitulations* of Santa Fé, the document which contains the final and probably the persistent demands of Columbus and the answers of the sovereigns to those demands, is not known to be in existence. It has been stated that this original is preserved in the *Libro-Registro de la Corona de Aragon*.¹ But it is only necessary to examine the document in question in order to see that this statement is erroneous. It opens with the following passage:

The demands made and which your highnesses give and grant

¹ E.g. by Ulloa (*op. cit.*, pp. 350 *et seq.*). He bases his theory of a Columbian pre-discovery of America largely upon the appearance of the past tense in the heading of this document.

to Don Christopher Columbus in some satisfaction for that which he has discovered in the Ocean Sea and for the voyage which, with the help of God, he is now to make in them in the service of your highnesses. . . .¹

The appearance of the past tense has attracted the attention of various writers. Navarrete, somewhat arbitrarily, altered the past into the future, without noting the fact that he had so modified the text which he printed. Others, declining to accept the view that this correction was legitimate, have suggested that Columbus was so assured of the existence of the lands which he sought and so confident of success, that he regarded them as being already discovered. It has even been fancifully suggested that the past tense represents the fact, and that Columbus had already been to the New World before he made his application to Ferdinand and Isabella.

It is, however, entirely unnecessary to adopt any such explanation or to conclude with Navarrete that the text is corrupt, since it is perfectly clear that the copy in the *Libro-Registro* post-dates the first voyage. In it, Columbus is given the title of Don, which was not then a mere epithet of courtesy but implied nobility. The right to use this title, however, was not granted to him until after his return; in the grant made to him at Granada, he is not so described. Its appearance in the *Capitulations* has been explained as proof of the extreme vanity of the discoverer, but this explanation is untenable. Quite apart from the fact that Columbus is little likely to have been so unwise as to risk incurring the displeasure of Isabella, who was notoriously sensitive to any infringement of her prerogative, it is obvious that no royal clerk would have dared to confer upon him a title which he had not been granted. This particular copy of the document, moreover, is in the handwriting of Almazán, Ferdinand's alter ego, a man by temperament careful, scrupulously accurate, and even

¹ 'Las cosas suplicadas e que Vuestras Altezas dan é otorgan a don Xristoval de Colon en alguna satisfación de lo que ha descubierto en los mares oceanas y del viaje que agora con el ayuda de dios ha de hacer por allas en servicio de Vuestras Altezas.' The text of the *Capitulations* is printed in Navarrete (ii, pp. 7-8), and in *Rac. Col.* (II. ii, pp. 23-4): it is also given by Las Casas (i. 32), &c.

punctilious.¹ It is wholly inconceivable that he should have been guilty of so gross a breach of etiquette. It may be added that he was not concerned with the negotiations at Santa Fé, and that the royal assent to the demands of Columbus was witnessed not by him but by Juan de Coloma. The nature of the copy in the *Libro-Registro* thus becomes clear. After the return of Columbus, the grant made to him at Granada was confirmed at Barcelona; a record of the demands of Columbus and of the reply to them was obviously prepared by Almazán for the use of the sovereigns in the work of preparing the confirmatory grant. The past tense is thus accurately used in the preliminary statement of the nature of the document which follows, as the future tense is used with equal accuracy in the body of the document itself. Since Ferdinand and Isabella had already addressed Columbus as Don in their letter summoning him to the court to give an account of his voyage, the royal secretary naturally gives him that title.

But while the extant version of the *Capitulations* is not the original, there is no reason to suppose that it does anything but accurately represent the demands made by Columbus and the replies given to those demands. The exactness of the copy is, indeed, demonstrated by a certain variation between it and the text of the formal grant made at Granada. In the *Capitulations*, Columbus asks to be made viceroy and governor-general of the islands and *tierra firme* which he shall 'discover or gain', and to this request the sovereigns signify their assent. In the actual grant, he is promised this position in the islands and *tierra firme* which he shall 'discover and gain'. The sovereigns thus did not actually grant that which Columbus had asked and which they had at first promised. He sought to obtain a certain position in such territories as he might either discover or annex to the crown of Castile; he was promised eventually that he should receive this position in such territories as he might both discover and annex. Ferdinand and Isabella

¹ Bergenroth, *Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers: England and Spain: Vol. I, Henry VII: Int.*, pp. xvii-xix; cxxxv.

² Cp. the text in Navarrete, ii, pp. 9-11, &c.

insisted upon the fulfilment of two conditions, instead of upon the fulfilment of one only.

Nor is it probable that this modification was due to some mere oversight, that it was anything but deliberate. Careless drafting was not characteristic of official documents in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, and in this case there is an apparently obvious reason for the change. In laying his proposals before the sovereigns, Columbus had undoubtedly been somewhat economical of exact detail; if there were no other reason for believing this to be so, it would seem to be sufficiently indicated by the fact that when he set out on his first voyage, he was expressly forbidden to go to La Mina da Ouro or to the coast of Guinea, where he might come into conflict with the Portuguese.¹ It is probable enough that he had not explained whether he intended to sail to the north, to the south, or to the west; 'in the Ocean Sea' is a somewhat vague description of the situation of the 'islands and *tierra firme*', especially when it is remembered that Columbus laid down that all seas are one, and it may be with some assurance asserted that Ferdinand and Isabella were not given any more accurate description. On the other hand, Columbus had insisted upon the value of the discoveries which he proposed to make; it may be legitimately presumed that he had at least allowed it to be understood that he was going to lands from which gold, precious stones, and spices might be obtained. The unanimous opinion of that age was that such lands could be found only in the south and east, and since Columbus had apparently offered no objection to the inhibition laid upon any expedition to the former, it was natural to assume that his design was to reach the latter.

To Ferdinand and Isabella, it must have therefore seemed to be almost palpably obvious that Columbus intended to find a new route to Asia; this conviction is expressed in the wording of the passport granted to him; it is declared that he

¹ 'con tanto que vos, ni el dicho Cristóbal Colón, ni otros algunos de los que fueren en las dichas carabelas, no vayan á la Mina, ni al trato de ella que tiene el Serenisimo Rey de Portugal, nuestro Hermano, porque nuestra voluntad es de guardar é que se guarde lo que con el dicho Rey de Portugal sobre esto tenemos asentado é capitulado:' *Royal provision addressed to Palos*, 10 Apr. 1492: (Navarrete, ii, pp. 11-13). Cp. also the *Journal*, 9 Mar. 1493.

is going 'cum tribus caravelis armatis per maria oceanica ad partes Indie'. It was not less obvious to them that this attempt would bring him to Cipangu and Catayo. Between Spain and those lands, it was supposed that there lay nothing more important than some islands, in all probability similar in character and extent to the Canaries and the Azores. The sovereigns were thus able more readily to accede to the demands of Columbus, when they felt assured that this was his design; they could feel that they were making no grant of any great moment. They would, perhaps, have felt far less hesitancy in acceding to his requests, had it not been that he himself obviously attached so great importance to the grants for which he asked.

At the eleventh hour, it would seem that Ferdinand and Isabella were assailed by a certain misgiving and were led to wonder whether, after all, they had not promised more than they were really prepared to grant. In any case, it was at the eleventh hour that they safeguarded their position by the substitution of a conjunctive for a disjunctive, thereby to all seeming rendering their concession innocuous. For if they were correct in their supposition that Columbus proposed to sail to Cipangu and Catayo, they were in reality granting him nothing at all. It would be impossible for him to claim that he had discovered Catayo, a land which had been visited and described by Marco Polo and from which ambassadors had come to Pope Eugenius IV. It would be hardly possible for him to allege that he had discovered Cipangu. It might, indeed, be urged that this land had never been visited by any one from Europe, but its position was known or was supposed to be known, a Grand Khan had attempted its conquest, and there were in existence accounts of its golden palaces and rich cities. Even, however, if Columbus could claim to have discovered these lands, it would assuredly be impossible for him to 'gain' them. He was setting out with three vessels, two of which were small; although in the passport they are described as 'armed', they were not actually equipped for warlike operations, nor were they so manned as to be fitted to engage in such operations. The expedition could obviously effect nothing against powerful and organized

states, such as Cipangu and Catayo were reputed to be. It might, indeed, be apparently assumed with some certainty that it would be altogether ineffective for the purpose of 'gaining' any lands of importance. In the view of Ferdinand and Isabella, it might well seem that they had guarded against the danger that Columbus would become 'an over-mighty subject' as a result of the agreement which they had concluded with him.

It is hardly conceivable that Columbus should have imagined that with the means placed at his disposal he could 'gain' rich kingdoms in Asia. Even if he had been so optimistic, or if he had supposed that initial success would induce the sovereigns to accord him greater support, he must yet have been aware that hostile operations against monarchs in eastern Asia would be entirely contrary to the consistent policy of Ferdinand and Isabella. It was always their aim to cultivate friendly relations with all those oriental rulers who might be induced to oppose the Ottoman Turks. When the sultan of Egypt protested against the treatment of his co-religionists in Spain, Peter Martyr Angleria was sent on a mission to conciliate him and to negotiate, if possible, an alliance against the Ottoman.¹ Efforts were made to establish cordial relations with the Grand Khan and to secure the aid of the half-mythical Prester John, with the same idea of attacking the Turks from the east. Unless it be supposed that Columbus took the word 'ganar' to mean no more than 'gain the friendship', it cannot be supposed that he hoped to gain eastern Asia, and even were he to secure the friendship of the rulers of those lands, he would not thereby become a viceroy and governor-general.

On the other hand, Columbus would seem to have been perfectly satisfied with the grant made to him. He declares that the means supplied were generally adequate, although he does complain that smaller vessels would have been better suited for the work of exploration. After his discovery had been achieved, and when he is contemplating a second expedition, he does not seek to be given a large armament; it is for 'muy poquita ayuda' that he asks. It thus seems to

¹ Cp. Martyr, *De Legatione Babylonica*.

be obvious that the known or relatively known Asiatic lands cannot have been in his mind when he sought to be appointed viceroy and governor-general, that it was something else that he proposed to discover and gain.

Vignaud urged that this something was Antilla and that it was of the island or islands in the Atlantic that Columbus was thinking. But this view does not accord either with the terms of the *Capitulations* or with such indications as there are of the estimate formed by Columbus concerning the character of his own undertaking. For, however extensive it may have been supposed to be, however wealthy, Antilla was still an island; it was not *tierra firme*. And if the idea of reaching this island had been really predominant in the mind of Columbus, it is curious that he should never have mentioned it and that he should apparently have so easily abandoned his original intention, making no effort to discover it after his first voyage. Nor can it be readily supposed that he was content with the hope that he might win something equivalent to the Canaries or the Azores. That he was ambitious, and that he was even inordinately ambitious, can hardly be doubted; that he regarded his enterprise as something far greater than any which had been accomplished by a Bethencourt or a de Lugo is certain enough. That it was with him no question of some island which he might discover is proved by the inclusion of the term *tierra firme*.¹ It is, indeed, sufficiently clear that Columbus believed that he would discover and that he would be able to gain something of extreme importance and that this something was neither the eastern shores of Asia nor the islands which figured vaguely on maps of the Atlantic Ocean.

His objective, then, becomes uncertain. It may be admitted that he contemplated the possibility of reaching Cipangu and Catayo; so much is proved by the evidence of

¹ It may be suggested that the inclusion of the term *tierra firme* was merely due to the desire of Columbus to guard against the possibility that there might be some doubt whether land discovered was or was not insular. But this explanation of the terms of the demands is hardly consistent with the fact that Columbus was obviously anxious to reach something that was not an island. It is clear that he hoped that Cuba would prove to be *tierra firme* (cp. *infra*, pp. 116 *et seq.*; and the questionnaire which he addressed to the crews of his vessels, 12 June 1494: Navarrete, ii, pp. 143-9).

the passport, of the *Journal*, and of the *Letter*. It may be equally admitted that he contemplated the possibility of reaching Antilla or other islands in the Ocean; the evidence so laboriously collected by Vignaud may be taken to show this. But in his mind there was something more; there was something which he was to discover and gain and which was of sufficient moment to justify every claim which he put forward. To fix the exact position of the islands and *tierra firme* of which he thought is, however, impossible. No more can be asserted than that it can hardly have been in the known east or in the midst of the Atlantic, and that the hypothesis that he was already at least dimly aware of the existence of the American continent is hardly tenable. It may, perhaps, be suggested with some confidence that Columbus himself was without any clear conception of that which he hoped to discover and gain, that his objective was altogether vague and that his purpose, when he set out on his first voyage, was not to reach any very definite point. It was to perform a mission, the precise nature of which he did not know, although he might suspect that which would in due course be made known to him.

18

At the present day, for a man to embark upon a voyage with no more than the very vaguest conception of the destination to which that voyage will conduct him is in reality impossible. The form and the extent of the globe have been accurately determined; it can no longer be imagined that its shape is anywhere distorted by a protuberance, stretching for an unknown distance into the very infinity of space. The limits of the area of possible exploration are definitely fixed; no 'new world' remains to be discovered, nor can it be supposed that any great 'mysteries' are still to be solved. So true is this that it is not altogether easy to realize that in the later fifteenth century the position was radically different, that much which is now certain was then wholly uncertain, and that those who set out to explore did in very truth set out to penetrate the unknown. In that age, scientific knowledge was no more than in its infancy, or, it may be, in the

process of rebirth; geographical conceptions were vague and somewhat fluid, and a great deal that is now realized to be utterly impossible was then held rather to be altogether within the bounds of probability. To the area of discovery there were then no recognized limits; the 'pear stalk', of which Columbus wrote, might even prove to be an isthmus uniting the known world with some celestial twin.

In such circumstances, the objective of any explorer, even of one whose temper was somewhat cold and practical, could hardly be more than provisional. He might set out with the deliberate intention of reaching a particular point; he was yet almost bound to admit that, for all that he could know, he might be carried to some entirely different goal, of the existence of which he had never dreamed. To a man of imagination, and it can hardly be denied that the majority of explorers were men of imagination, it was perhaps inevitable that the greatest doubt concerning the outcome of an expedition should seem to be merely rational. His objective might be ostensibly definite enough; it was so no more than ostensibly. The very quality which impelled him to seek to discover impelled him also to set no limits in his own mind upon that which he might reveal; he was almost bound to feel that it might be his destiny to reach a new world. The greater his imaginative gifts, the stronger was, of necessity, his conviction that the potentialities offered to him were incalculable.

In the special case of Columbus, it would seem that almost everything conspired to make this conviction exceptionally strong and accordingly to incline him to set before himself an objective so vague as hardly to be an objective at all. His imagination was at once vivid and untutored. He had in a marked degree the poetic temperament, which he reveals in his delight in the song of birds, in the scent of flowers, in every vision of natural beauty. 'All was so delightful,' he writes on one occasion, 'that nothing was lacking save the voice of the nightingale.' The *Journal* again and again reveals the spirit of the poet, and here, at least, it may be safely concluded that the true feelings of Columbus are preserved, since no one could suspect Las Casas of a secret addiction to poetry. But while he was thus imaginative,

Columbus was also a man of no more than imperfect education; whatever practical or theoretical knowledge he had gained, he had not acquired the power, and he had perhaps no great desire to possess the power, of cold and systematic reasoning. He was, moreover, credulous, even if he did not actually believe such stories as that of the tailed men in Cuba, which Bernáldez unhesitatingly rejected as either a jest or a fable.

Above all he was deeply religious and his religion was at once personal and mystical. He was fully assured that he was under the special care of the Almighty; again and again, he declares that God always guided and guarded him, and in his very trials, he saw the hand of Providence so forming his character and so shaping his ends that he might be the better fitted to fulfil that purpose which Heaven had decreed that he should fulfil. To him, moreover, signs were vouchsafed; he set out on his third voyage in the name of the Holy Trinity, and it was no mere coincidence that the first land sighted was the three peaks of Trinidad; here was a clear promise of success.

Yet, despite his limitations, Columbus undoubtedly possessed abilities above the ordinary, and of this he was himself fully aware. His mind was active and his intelligence acute, even if his learning were small and his judgement very imperfect. Others might have greater capacity of one kind or another; it was his special gift to appreciate the hidden importance of that of which they were merely aware, to understand that which they merely knew. He was profoundly convinced of his ability to perform great deeds; in his self-confidence there is, indeed, something of the sublime. It was thus impossible for him to believe that he was to pass all his days as a mere weaver or carder of wool, or as a subordinate in an Italian business house. It can hardly be doubted that even as a boy he resented the position of inferiority to which he was condemned by the obscurity and poverty of his family. That resentment is, indeed, revealed by his very ambition, by his earnest desire to wield authority, by his otherwise somewhat sordid anxiety to acquire wealth.

Nor was his revolt against his environment the vain com-

plaining of a mean soul. It was rather that fruitful indignation which forces a man to endeavour to master his fate and which fills him with faith that his endeavour will not be barren of result. If any reliance can be placed upon the imperfect accounts of his early life, Columbus was still young when he resolved to escape from the hampering restrictions which circumstances imposed upon him. He did that which a Genoese of ambition and of an adventurous temper might naturally be expected to do; he turned to that career which had in the past proved to be the avenue to wealth and power for so many of his compatriots, and aspired perhaps to become, as they had become, a great merchant prince. It is hardly fanciful to suggest that he turned to the west, rather than to the east, because while eastern fields were already well tilled, those in the west were as yet almost virgin soil. It may be safely asserted that he embarked upon a new career with the more confidence because his mysticism convinced him that his intention was not his own, but the result of divine inspiration, because he felt that he was taking the first step on the path which would enable him to reach that goal which it was the will of God that he should reach.

While, however, so much was clear to him, perhaps no more was clear. He could not foresee to what goal he would be led, nor, it may be, did he wish to foresee it; for him, as for another mystic of more modern times, one step was enough; he did not ask to see the distant scene. He was content to wait upon that Providence in Whose care he was; more than once, he rebukes his own impatience and lack of faith, hearing the divine voice chiding him with his unbelief. But it was inevitable that he should expect a revelation to come, and it may be conjectured that it was in Madeira and the Azores that he felt that it had been given to him. There he heard stories, some of which are faithfully recorded in the *Journal*, in the pages of his son and of Las Casas, stories of mysterious islands dimly seen through the morning and evening mists; stories of bodies of men, belonging to some unknown race, which had been cast upon the shore, of pieces of wood, curiously carved, of branches of unfamiliar trees, borne to the

¹ Cp. *Journal*, 9 Aug.: Ferdinand Columbus, c. 9: Las Casas, i, 13.

INTRODUCTION

coast by the winds and currents of the Ocean. He heard also of those who had ventured out in search of that which lay hidden beyond the western horizon, of how some had returned, after having been tossed by storms and almost overwhelmed by waves, their quest unfulfilled, of how others had never come back. In all this there was enough to fire a mind less imaginative than that of Columbus; its effect upon one who was of such a temper as was he can only have been profound. When it is remembered that he was also reticent, constitutionally disposed to feed upon his own thoughts and to hide them from others, it is not extravagant to suppose that all which he heard assumed a peculiar importance in his mind and that in it he found that revelation of the divine will for which his mysticism impelled him to look. Believing that he had a mission to perform, always expecting that the nature of this mission would be made known to him, it was natural enough that he should here find it, that he should be sure that it was the will of God that he should succeed where all others had failed and that he should at last penetrate the mystery of the Atlantic.

19

There seems to be little doubt that one marked characteristic of the proposals which Columbus laid before the rulers of Portugal and Castile was their vagueness; such is, at least, the impression derived from such accounts as exist of his negotiations with Ferdinand and Isabella. He would appear to have deliberately refused to admit into his confidence those for whose assistance he was pleading, despite the fact that by such refusal he could hardly fail to prejudice his chances of securing that which he sought. To some extent, an explanation of his conduct may be found in his habitual reticence. He was by nature so cautious as to be somewhat suspicious; it is not unreasonable to suggest that he dreaded lest his ideas, of the greatness and value of which he was profoundly convinced, might be appropriated by others and he himself thus cheated of the reward which he so earnestly coveted. To some extent also, an explanation is perhaps to be found in his belief that his project was not of mere human devising;

that it was not permissible for him to anticipate or to attempt to anticipate a divine revelation.

But there is a further and more obvious explanation. If it were his primary purpose to solve the mystery of the Atlantic, it is clear that he could not be anything but somewhat vague; he was himself obviously unaware of the exact nature of that mystery. He might be convinced that the result of its solution would be wonderful, that it would entail the discovery of new lands, rich and populous. Of this, he might be so assured that he could speak of those lands as if he had already visited them, or as if he had in some way gained certain knowledge concerning them. He could not, however, describe their exact situation, even if he had desired to do so. They were to be reached by the path of a voyage into the Atlantic; of so much he might be sure. Of more than this he could not be sure. All else constituted part of that very mystery which it was his purpose and his destiny to solve.

Looking back at the present day upon his first voyage, knowing what were the actual results of that voyage and realizing that its issue was bound to be the discovery of the continent which is interposed between western Europe and eastern Asia, it is somewhat hard to appreciate even the possibility that Columbus had no clear conception of that which was to follow from his expedition. It is, perhaps, easy to conceive that he should have fancied that he would reach not a new world, but the farthest extremity of the old; or that he should have imagined that his voyage would bring him to the half-mythical islands of the west. It is far from easy to picture him as having perhaps neither Asia nor Antilla primarily in his mind, although so much is very forcibly suggested by the very nature of the demands which he made. That it was upon the west, which, as Bernáldez puts it, was in truth the east, that the mind of Columbus was fixed, has indeed been regarded as almost axiomatic.

Despite the consensus of opinion in favour of this view, however, its absolute justice is yet open to doubt. It is true enough that it was upon a westerly course that he steered; it is true enough that upon more than one occasion he insisted

that no great distance parted the shores of Spain from those of Catayo, and that his conviction upon this point almost certainly played a very important part in encouraging him to embark upon his enterprise. It cannot be denied that he was assured that to the west across the Atlantic there lay land which could be reached or that to reach this land was his deliberate purpose; nor is it really contestable that he believed that he would thus arrive, if not at the dominions of the Grand Khan, at least at some point adjacent to those dominions. But it may be questioned whether this was his whole purpose, whether when he at last sighted Guanahani he felt that he had done more than complete an initial step, whether he would have felt that he had done more even if that island had proved to be Cipangu, even if he had found in the West Indies great cities, mighty sovereigns, and a vast and civilized population.

It has been noted as an apparently curious fact that Columbus did not follow the precise course which would seem to have been suggested in the letter of Toscanelli and which might have been expected to lead him directly to Quinsay. In place of steering immediately westwards, he turned at first somewhat to the south, proceeding to the Canaries and only setting out upon his actual voyage from those islands. This circumstance has, indeed, been taken to indicate that he owed nothing to the Florentine philosopher; it has been taken also to show that Columbus had some special knowledge of the prevailing winds in the Atlantic and of the ocean currents. A simpler and a more rational explanation of his action is afforded by the reflection that the Canaries were the most westerly possession of the Castilian crown. Upon every ground, it was obviously wise to make them the starting-point of the actual voyage of discovery. Columbus thus gave himself the opportunity of taking in at the last possible moment requisite supplies; casks could be filled with water, the stock of wood could be replenished and provisions taken on board. It was possible also for his vessels to be refitted; in actual fact, the rig of the *Niña* was there changed and the rudder of the *Pinta* repaired.¹ Upon psychological grounds,

¹ *Journal*, 9 Aug.

his deviation from the direct course westward was equally advisable. It had been a matter of some difficulty to find crews prepared to brave the dangers of a voyage into an unknown sea;¹ there is no doubt that every reduction in the length of time during which they would be out of sight of land was a gain, lessening the possibility of disaffection among the men and minimizing the ever-present danger of panic terror. When, however, all this has been admitted, it is still possible that a certain significance does attach to the fact that Columbus steered somewhat to the south, and it is, indeed, possible that he would have done so even if considerations of expediency had not been operative. For it is at least possible that it was upon the potentialities of the south, rather than upon those of the west, that his hopes were really fixed, and that to turn somewhat southward from the due westerly course was really in accord with his conception of the ultimate purpose of his enterprise.

If the evidence of the *Journal* may be accepted on this point, Columbus, before he set out on his first voyage, was instructed to avail himself of Portuguese harbours and to apply to the Portuguese authorities for such supplies as he might need. At the same time, he was expressly forbidden to go to Mina da Ouro or to the coast of Guinea. An obvious reason for this inhibition is to be found in the desire of Ferdinand and Isabella to avoid the danger of friction with the Portuguese, the African coast having been recognized as the preserve of Portugal since the treaty which ended the War of Succession. If, however, it had been clear that the design of Columbus was to proceed due west and that the west alone was in his mind, the prohibition would seem to have been somewhat superfluous. It would, perhaps, have been rather worse than superfluous. The dangers of the projected voyage were undoubtedly dreaded by the crews of the three vessels; it was obviously wise to avoid doing anything which might serve to increase that dread. But to proclaim 'in all the ports of Andalusia' that the route to be followed would not lie along the African shore and that it would therefore lead into the trackless expanse of the ocean was assuredly calculated to

¹ Las Casas, i. 24.

excite alarm amongst those who were disposed to feel terror and to anticipate disaster. There must, therefore, have been some good reason for the issue of the order. It is possible, indeed, that this reason may be found in the desire of the sovereigns to discover the actual intentions of Columbus, and that they forbade him to sail along the African shore in order to find whether he had any wish to do so.

To this explanation of the order, however, there is the obvious objection that it would have been a somewhat elaborate method of securing information, which when secured would be no more than negative and in no sense precise. It is equally possible and more probable that the prohibition was designed to guard against a danger, in the existence of which Ferdinand and Isabella had some reason to believe; it may be reasonably supposed that Columbus had somehow created the impression that he was looking towards the south rather than towards the west. If he had produced any such impression, it was obviously advisable and even essential to warn him that he must not so act as to infringe the stipulation, formal or implied, of the agreements between Castile and Portugal. It would be illegitimate to assert with any approach to dogmatism that this is the true explanation. It is, after all, an incontrovertible fact that Columbus sailed west across the Atlantic and it would be a somewhat wild hypothesis that he had not originally intended to do so. At the same time, there is some reason for thinking that, while Columbus proposed to reach the opposite shore of the ocean, his deeper purpose, or if not his purpose at least his hope, was to attain other lands than those which, whether Asiatic or non-Asiatic, lay directly to the west of Spain beyond the Atlantic.

There is a curious characteristic of the notes, on the *Imago Mundi* and other works, which has, perhaps, not received the attention which it deserves and which may serve to elucidate the problem of his actual design. In those notes, it is true enough that Columbus, or their author if he were another than Columbus himself, marks the various references to eastern Asia, but it may be added that he marks also references to the characteristics of lands which were certainly not Asiatic. It cannot be said that he lays any particular

emphasis upon those passages which concern Asia beyond the Ganges, as opposed to such as refer to Asia within the Ganges. There is, however, a particular type of passage to which he does seem to wish to draw very special attention. If he may be said to underline every reference to Catayo, he may be said to underline doubly every reference to that which lay south of the Equator.¹ It is curious that whereas in general the notes do not reveal any personal opinion, those which refer to the south do contain such revelation. He marks every statement to the effect that in this part of the world the climate is very temperate and that the lands there are populous, and he adds with almost obvious satisfaction that the discoveries of the Portuguese have proved the truth of the conjectures of early writers. He notes that some have regarded the south as the highest and therefore as the most excellent part of the globe, and it is clear that with this opinion he is in agreement, rather than with the contrary opinion that the north was the region nearest the heavens. He accepts also the view that in the south, and not in the east, lies the Earthly Paradise, as he afterwards found there that distortion which he conceived to characterize 'the other hemisphere' and of the importance of which he was so deeply convinced.

This insistence upon the south is the more remarkable if it be admitted that the intention of the notes was to produce witness to the great material wealth of the lands which he had discovered. For whatever else might be supposed to be true concerning those lands, it was certain that no part of them lay to the south of the equator; so far as they were concerned, it was of no interest whether the south was or was not temperate or inhabited. If his attention were really fixed on the west, whether as the west or as the gateway to the east, his peculiar interest in something which was neither west nor east can be explained only by the supposition that he was indulging idle curiosity. That supposition, however, hardly accords with his intensity of interest, and it so accords the less because Columbus, throughout his life, would appear to have been possessed of the power of concentration and to have

¹ Cp. notes 22, 24, 29, on Pius II (*Rac. Col.* I. ii, pp. 293-4); and notes 16, 18, 20, 23, 33, and 40, on the *Imago Mundi* (*Rac. Col.* I. ii, pp. 275, 376, 378, 379).

been little disposed to concern himself with anything which did not seem to be germane to his great purpose. It would appear to be more probable that the explanation of this characteristic of the notes is to be found in the fact that the south was prominently in his mind and that he looked to the south for that which he hoped to find.

It would seem to be also probable that it was not only in later life that this was the case. It is true that the annotations would appear rather to postdate than to antedate the discovery, despite the contrary view held by no less an authority than De Lollis, and that they cannot therefore be taken necessarily to represent the opinions of Columbus at the earlier period. It is further reasonable to suppose that his opinions developed with the passage of time and as a result of the experience gained upon his voyages. On the other hand, there is no evidence of fundamental change in his ideas. So far as can be judged, the views which he entertained at the time of his last were in essentials those which he entertained at the time of his first voyage; he would seem to have found reasons rather to confirm than to correct his conceptions. When, therefore, in the notes he shows a special interest in the south, it is not unfair to presume that this interest was no new thing and that he had felt it from the first. But if this were so, it almost necessarily follows that his ultimate objective lay there.

That it did so would appear to be confirmed by his conduct on his first voyage. After he had effected his landfall at Guanahani, he made his way to Cuba, to the southward. On reaching the shore of that island, he very soon turned to the eastward; having come to the strait which divides Cuba from Española, he did not pass through it, but continued in the same direction, until the wreck of the *Santa Maria* brought further exploration to a close. He thus constantly failed to aim directly westward, as he might have been expected to do if the ultimate west were his goal, and still more if he had seriously wished to reach the dominions of the Grand Khan, since he was convinced that they lay at no great distance to the westward.¹ To some extent, the course

¹ Cp. *Journal*, 28 Oct., 1 Nov., and *infra*, p. 12.

which he followed may be explained by a wish to verify the information which he had received from the natives whom he had taken; to some extent, it may be explained by the direction of the wind and by the condition of his ships, to the somewhat unsatisfactory state of which there are references in the *Journal*. But it may be questioned whether it can be fully so explained. He declares that, if his vessels had been better suited for the purpose, or if Pinzón had not parted company with him, he would have continued the work of exploration,¹ but it is noteworthy that he would have done so apparently not to the westward but to the southward. So far as he states his desire in this respect, it was to go to the Carib Islands and to the island of women.

This same tendency to steer always to the south, rather than to the west, as soon as the actual passage of the Atlantic had been achieved, appears equally in his later voyages. On his second voyage, instead of following the course which he had previously taken, he steered much farther to the south; on his third voyage, his course was still more southerly. That this variation cannot be wholly explained on the supposition that he wished to avail himself of favourable winds, is really proved by his own account of his unhappy experiences on the third voyage, and by the whole tenour of his letter to the sovereigns.² In the case of his last voyage, his aim appears even more clearly. It has often been remarked that it almost seems as if some perverse fate prevented Columbus from anticipating Grijalva and Cortés, that he was so near to the discovery of Mexico that it appears to be bitterly ironical that he failed to make the discovery. On his first voyage, if, after reaching Cuba, he had sailed west instead of east, he would almost certainly have reached Florida, and by this initial discovery he might easily have been led to penetrate farther into the Gulf of Mexico, to explore its northern coast and hence to reach its western extremity. On his last voyage, having sighted Cape Honduras, instead of following the coast of the gulf towards the modern Guatemala, he turned southward, with the result that in place of reaching those rich and civilized lands at the door of which he was, he discovered

¹ Cp. *Journal*, 3 Jan., 8 Jan.

² Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, pp. 2 *et seq.*

Darien and Nombre de Dios. That he adopted that course which he did adopt was no doubt because he was in search of some strait, but it may be reasonably urged that the strait which he wished to find was one which should lead him not west but south. There is, indeed, at least some ground for arguing that the aim of Columbus has been imperfectly appreciated and that he conceived the islands and mainland, of which he aspired to be viceroy and governor-general, from which he hoped to win wealth beyond that of Solomon, to lie not at the extremity of the east, but in the unknown south.

20

When the conception which Columbus would appear to have formed concerning the nature of his enterprise is considered, the suggestion that it was in the south that he hoped to find the goal of his desire acquires a somewhat greater probability. It is certain that at a later date he believed himself to be the missionary of God, destined to reveal a new Heaven and a new Earth; it is at the very least arguable that from the very first he entertained this belief, and that even before he had formed any idea of the project which he ultimately undertook to execute, he regarded himself as having been chosen by God to do some great thing. There is at least some reason for thinking that, when he sailed from Palos, he was convinced that he was setting forth to make a discovery more momentous than any which had hitherto been made, and that he was destined to penetrate to those parts of the globe to which none had as yet penetrated, which until then had been hidden from the knowledge of mankind because God had decreed that they should so remain hidden.

At the same time, it is hardly questionable that he was fully assured that his enterprise would be productive both of honour and of material gain, and that in this honour and gain he would himself share to the full. The very terms of the demands which he made proves beyond doubt that in the accomplishment of his undertaking he saw the means by which he was to be rescued from obscurity and poverty and to win fame and wealth, by which he was to be enabled to exchange his humble for a noble status. If he believed that God

willed that through him many souls should be saved, Christendom enriched and the Holy Places rescued,¹ it was assuredly also his belief that God would not forget His servant or deny to him that recompense which was the just due of one who was to labour so fruitfully in the service of Heaven. Over the lands which he was to discover, he was to be ruler; from those lands, he was to derive riches; in them, he was to find the fullest satisfaction for an ambition which was not to be appeased by a little.

It would thus seem to be also true that his real objective must have lain in some quarter of the globe in which he might find territories to acquire, which should supply him with the means of satisfying his utmost desire for power and wealth. But, if so much be admitted, it is hardly possible to believe that his true goal was either the islands of the Atlantic or the Far East. The former were, after all, no more than islands; even the fabled Antilla could not be regarded as the *tierra firme* of the *Capitulations* or be held to constitute a territory of such importance that its discovery could be described as the revelation of a new Heaven and a new Earth. Cipangu and Catayo, so far as their wealth and their populousness were concerned, might seem to constitute a more worthy objective, and by opening a new route to them, many souls might be won for Christ and a vast increase of wealth secured for Christendom and more especially for Castile. Here also Columbus might hope to find riches for himself, but he could not hope to find that for which he seems to have cared more than for riches, that power and position for which he so carefully stipulated. Even in his most optimistic moments, he can hardly have anticipated that he would ever become viceroy and governor-general of the dominions of the Grand Khan, or that he would 'gain' Cipangu which the Grand Khan himself had failed to subdue.

And if his true objective can thus hardly be supposed to have been the islands of the Ocean or the Far East, it can still less be supposed that it was some vast, unknown land

¹ 'que así . . . protesté á Vuestras Altezas que toda la ganancia d'esta mi empresa se gastase en la conquista de Hierusalem, y Vuestras Altezas se rieron y dixeron que les plazia' (*Journal*, 26 Dec.).

lying between the shores of Spain and those of Catayo. Such a supposition is precluded by the very nature of those cosmographical views which Columbus undoubtedly held. He was convinced that the distance which divided west from east across the Ocean was small; in the intervening space, it could not be believed that anything of greater moment than some islands was situated. It is true that the mere fact that such is the logical consequence of his conceptions does not in itself prove that it was accepted by Columbus; it would be illegitimate to argue that he necessarily reasoned so clearly. There is, however, evidence enough that in this case his conclusions followed from his premises. The *Journal* and the *Letter* show that he believed the islands which he discovered to be Asiatic; Cuba, to him, was undoubtedly Cipangu, and the natives of Guanahani were almost certainly at war with the Grand Khan. Nor did this belief in any wise distress him; if he experienced disappointment, it was rather because he failed to meet with conclusive proof that his belief was just.¹ If, however, he had anticipated that before reaching Asia, he would arrive at that *tierra firme*, to the government of which he had stipulated that he should be appointed, it would seem that so far from being anxious to prove that he had attained Cipangu and the neighbourhood of Catayo, he would have been anxious to find the exact contrary. It would thus appear to be also obvious that Columbus cannot have done other than accept the logical consequences of his cosmographical ideas in this respect, and hence have hoped to find his objective in some quarter other than in the space which intervened, according to those ideas, between Spain and the Far East.

Since, however, that quarter cannot have been the north, from which it was universally believed that no great riches could be derived, it seems to follow that it must have been in the south that he expected to find his ultimate goal. And if he did so, it was no more than natural. For it was in the south that Marco Polo had placed those innumerable islands, of which he had dimly heard; it was of islands in the same quarter that Mandeville had collected such marvellous stories. In the south also lay that *Terra Australis*, which

could be justly regarded as *tierra firme*, which figured in ancient maps, and which it is obvious that Columbus regarded as being anything but a desolate land of ice and snow. On the contrary, it was the stalk end of the pear, a region of infinite potentialities, a veritable 'new earth' and perhaps the gateway to a 'new heaven'. It was further assuredly a *terra incognita*, to which man had never penetrated, and filled with peoples who had never heard of the Gospel of Christ. In it might indeed be expected to be found all that should enable Columbus to realize his most ambitious dreams.

If this were actually his ultimate purpose, the reticence which he displayed in his negotiations with Ferdinand and Isabella becomes immediately understandable. It was very generally believed that the extreme south was both uninhabited and uninhabitable, a region of ice and snow, whence nothing of value could be derived. To have declared openly that he sought help in order to make an expedition to that quarter of the globe would have been almost to court a contemptuous refusal. The voyage which he proposed in his own mind, if such were indeed his aim, was, moreover, one so novel in conception and for so vast a distance, that its accomplishment would have appeared to be altogether impossible. Those who were to form the crews of his vessels were terrified at the thought of endeavouring to cross the Atlantic; they would have been far more terrified, had it been suggested to them that when the Atlantic had been crossed, no more than the first and perhaps the easier part of their voyage would have been achieved. For Columbus to allow it to be believed that the distance to be traversed was at least calculable was no more than necessary prudence.

Nor can it be held that the course which he actually followed is inconsistent with the supposition that his true objective was neither the extreme west nor the Far East. It was advisable and it was perhaps essential so to steer as to be as far as possible in constant touch with land. To follow the African coast would have been the most obvious route, but that route was closed to him. It was thus necessary to find some other coast which might be followed, and it might well be expected that across the ocean Africa was paralleled by

Asia. To sail west until land was reached and then to turn southward along its shore would be the method which would naturally suggest itself, and it is at least certain that when he had reached the Indies, Columbus does seem to have adopted such a course until the wreck of the *Santa Maria* prevented further exploration.

It may, therefore, be suggested that there is some justification for the view that it was in the south that the true objective of Columbus lay. To assert dogmatically that this was so would be, indeed, illegitimate. Neither before, nor during, nor after, his first voyage, did he ever declare his aim in unequivocal terms; he sought 'the Indies', but the exact application of that term in his mind cannot be determined. It is, however, a fact that he sought to establish relations with the Grand Khan and to deliver to that potentate the letters of which he was the bearer, and it would seem to be therefore idle to deny that to reach the eastern shores of Asia was at least part of his purpose. At the same time, it is difficult, if it be not impossible, to maintain that this was his whole purpose. The suggestion that it was appears to be inconsistent both with the terms of the *Capitulations* of Santa Fé and with the course which he followed after he had reached Guanahani. There is thus a possibility that his real purpose has hitherto been no more than partially understood, and that to cross the Atlantic to the shores of Asia was no more than a means to an end. However this may be, it is hardly questionable that, whereas in the Far East Columbus could scarcely have expected to make the revelation of 'a New Heaven and a New Earth', in the south he could expect to do so; there, in less grandiloquent language, he could hope to find the means by which he might acquire riches, fame, and honour, and by which 'the poor stranger' might be transformed into 'Don Cristóbal Colón', a viceroy and governor-general, taking rank among the mightiest princes of the earth.

NOTES ON THE DOCUMENTS

1. *Letter of Columbus: on the First Voyage*¹

(pp. 2-19)

THE original of the letter of Columbus, describing the general results of his first voyage, is not known to be now in existence. Several versions of it, however, have been preserved, and while no one of them can be regarded as an exact copy of the original, it is possible from them to reconstruct with some approach to certainty the text of the lost document. The materials for such reconstruction are four Spanish and three Italian versions, and a Latin version, extracts preserved in the *Historia de los Reyes Católicos* of *Andrés Bernáldez*, and the metrical Italian rendering made by Giulano Dati.

Of the different versions of the letter, the position of primary importance must obviously be assigned to the four Spanish. These are:

(A) ² The folio.

This consists of two leaves, the text on a full page measuring 9 inches by 6 inches (246 mm. × 169 mm.). The recto of folio 1 and that of folio 2 both contain forty-seven lines; the verso of folio 1 contains forty-eight lines and that of folio 2 sixteen lines. The extra line on the verso of folio 1 is partially obliterated and is imperfectly repeated as the first line of the recto of folio 2, which suggests that each full page was intended to consist of forty-seven lines and that the forty-eighth line of the verso of folio 1 was due to faulty printing, or that the work of printing the letter was entrusted to two persons working simultaneously. The letter begins with an initial 'S' in a woodcut. No date or place of printing is given, but it is universally agreed that the date should be April-May 1493.

Only one copy of this edition is known. It was reproduced in facsimile by Maisonneuve of Paris in 1889,³ and having

¹ By far the most valuable and masterly discussion of the various questions concerning this letter is that by De Lollis, *Scritti di Colombo* (*Rac. Col.* I. i, pp. xxv-lxvii), upon which this note is mainly based.

² The letters used to distinguish the different versions are adopted from De Lollis (*Rac. Col.* I. i, pp. xxv-xxvi).

³ *La Lettre de Christophe Colomb annonçant la découverte du Nouveau Monde.*

been purchased by Bernard Quaritch, was again reproduced in facsimile in London in 1891, an English translation, an introduction and notes being added by 'M.K.' (Michael Kerney).¹ The unique copy is now in the Lenox Collection of the New York Public Library.²

(B) The quarto.

This consists of four leaves, the text on a full page measuring 6 inches by 4 inches (150 mm. × 100 mm.). Each page contains thirty-two lines, except the verso of leaf 4, which contains twenty-five lines. The letter begins with an initial 'S' in a woodcut. No date or place of printing is given, but it is agreed that the date must be 1493.

Only one copy of this edition is known. It was left in 1852 by Baron Pietro Custodi to the Ambrosian Library at Milan, where it now is. A copy of this version was made by hand for the marquis Girolamo d'Adda in 1866 and lithographic examples were published. Some years later, five examples were fabricated by hand from the lithographic copy and were sold as newly discovered originals, by a native of Bologna, who confessed his fraud to De Lollis in 1892. In the interval, one of these fabrications was bought in London and there published,³ being afterwards sold in the United States; the fraud was detected and a lawsuit followed.⁴ There is no doubt that the only extant copy of the quarto is that in the Ambrosian Library.

(C) The MS. copy from the Archives of Simancas.

In 1818 Tomás Gonzalez, the custodian of the archives at Simancas, made a copy of a MS. of the letter which was then in his care. This MS. was then in a very damaged condition and it no longer exists. From the copy made by Gonzalez, Navarrete printed his version of the letter in 1825.⁵

¹ *The Spanish Letter of Columbus to Luis de Sant' Angel.*

² Both the folio and the quarto are reproduced in facsimile in Thacher, *Christopher Columbus* (ii, pp. 17-20, 33-40). An English translation of the letter is also given (pp. 21-26).

³ *The Letter in Spanish of Christopher Columbus to Luis de Sant' Angel* (London, 1889). This volume must, of course, be distinguished from the volume with somewhat similar title published by Quaritch in 1891 (*op. supra*).

⁴ Cp. Thacher, *op. cit.*, ii, p. 41, note 1.

⁵ Navarrete, *Colección de los Viajes &c.*, i, pp. 167-175.

(D) The MS. copy from the Colegio mayor of Cuenca.

This MS. was contained in a small quarto MS. volume, endorsed as having belonged to Don Juan de Sanfélices, Colegio mayor of Cuenca. The volume began with extracts from the *Ceremonial del Consejo de las Indias* and ended with other documents relating to the New World. It was bought at Valencia by Varnhagen, and the letter of Columbus was printed by him, but not in facsimile, in 1858.¹ After the discovery of B, Varnhagen published a revised edition of his volume in 1869,² supplying a critical consideration of D in the light of the discovery of the quarto. The MS., printed by Varnhagen, is known only through his account of it, and it has now disappeared.

When Varnhagen first printed D, he was of opinion that it was an accurate copy of the original letter; after the discovery of B, he frankly admitted that his estimate had been erroneous. It is uncertain whether the MS. was in a sixteenth or a seventeenth century hand, but the later date is the more probable, having regard to the other contents of the volume and to the fact that the Cuenca copy of the letter of Columbus of 1502 undoubtedly dates from the seventeenth century.³ It is not unlikely that D should be regarded as an attempt to construct an accurate version of the letter, the printed Spanish text or some MS. copy being revised in the light of the Latin translation and of the *Historie* of Ferdinand Columbus and the *Historia General* of Herrera. In any case, the value of D is dubious, and its apparently greater accuracy cannot be regarded as proving that it was in reality made from the lost original or that it exactly reproduces that original.

Such exact reproduction is, in fact, not found in any of the four versions. It was at one time supposed that the Simancas MS. from which C was copied was the actual letter sent by Columbus. This supposition, however, was certainly due to a misunderstanding. When he made his copy, Gonzalez

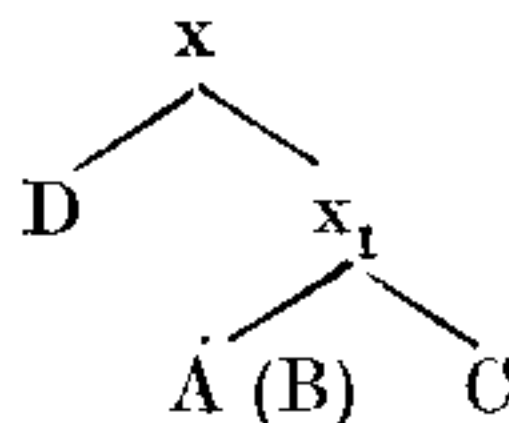
¹ Under the pseudonym, Genaro H. de Volafan: *Primera epistola del Almirante D. Cristóbal Colón*.

² *El Seudomino de Valencia: Carta de Cristóbal Colón*.

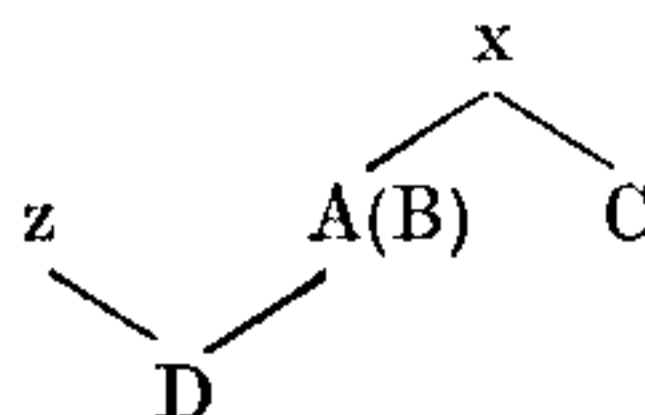
³ De Lollis (*op. cit.*, I. i, p. lii).

appended to it a note to the effect that it was made from 'the original document' in the Archives of Simancas,¹ and this note was taken to be an assertion on his part that the MS. was the original letter. There is, however, no doubt that it should not be taken to mean more than that the copy made was accurate; the document was only 'original' as opposed to the copy made by Gonzalez. The subsequent discovery of B, and afterwards of A, sufficed to show that C could not be regarded as an entirely faithful reproduction of the letter.

Nor is that character possessed either by B or by A. The final word upon the inter-relationship of A B C and upon the relationship between each of these and the original has been written by De Lollis. He has shown that while B is an edition of A, it is an edition made with reference to the source of A. That source, in the opinion of De Lollis, was x_1 , a copy of x , which in turn was a copy of the original, both x and x_1 being now lost. On the assumption that D must be given some value, De Lollis described the relationship of these four copies as being:



If, however, the final estimate apparently reached by Varnhagen concerning his own possession be accepted, the greater accuracy of D ceases to necessitate the supposition of the intervention of x_1 between A(B)C and x , the lost copy of the original letter. In this case, the relationship of the four versions would, perhaps, be more accurately represented as:



¹ The note reads: 'Está copiada literalmente del documento original que obra en este Real Archivo de Simancas; en el Despacho y correspondencia general. Est. de Simancas, 132 (N.º 175)'.

z representing the materials also used by the compiler of D, the Latin translation of the letter and the information contained in Ferdinand Columbus and Herrera. On the other hand, the very doubt which exists concerning the actual character of D makes it as impossible entirely to ignore it as it is impossible confidently to rely upon it.

The fact that no one of the extant versions can be regarded as exactly representing the original has made it possible to advance a hypothesis concerning that original which, although untenable, must be noticed. In his catalogue¹ of his books, Ferdinand Columbus includes the entry:

‘Christoforo Colon—Letera enviada al escribano deracion—1493—En catalan.—4643^o.’

The German translation of the letter, dating from 1497, is said to have been made from Catalan and Latin.² With these facts as a basis, it has been suggested that the original letter of Columbus was written in Catalan.³ It is pointed out that there are said to be forty-two Catalanisms in A, a number reduced to twenty-two in B.⁴ It is added that De Lollis, while arguing that some of the so-called ‘Catalanisms’ are in reality ‘Italianisms’, was so impressed by the appearance of Catalanisms in A and B, as to put forward as a possible explanation the suggestion that A B were prepared from an editio princeps printed at Barcelona.⁵ It is then contended that a more rational explanation is that the copy from which the printed versions were made was a translation into Castilian of a Catalan original, certain Catalan words remaining untranslated. It is urged that the style of the extant letter, which is admittedly different from that of the other letters of Columbus, is due to the fact of translation by someone very familiar with Castilian.

To this hypothesis, the ingenuity of which may be admitted,

¹ The catalogue has been printed in facsimile by Mr. A. M. Huntingdon. The Catalan version of the letter of Columbus has disappeared.

² *Eyn schon hubsch lesen von etlichen insulen die de in kuntzen zyten funden synd durch de konig von hispania, und sight vo grossen wonderlichen dingen die in deselbe insulen synd. Getuetschet uss der katilanischen zungen unduss dem latin zu Ulm. Barlomero kustler: strassburg, 1497.*

³ Ulloa, *Xristo-Ferens Colom*, pp. 34–79.

⁴ The list is given by ‘M.K.’, *Spanish letter of Columbus*, p. 29.

⁵ De Lollis (*op. cit.*, I. i, p. lxi).

there would seem, however, to be a number of sufficiently weighty objections. Of the forty-six alleged 'Catalanisms' in A, only ten can be legitimately regarded as such; of the twenty-two in B, only seven. Even of these, two, *mugers* for *mugeres*, and *quals* for *quales*, might be reasonably explained as mere printing errors. Others, such as the final *-es* for *-as* and the final *-t* for *-d*, would seem not to supply any very convincing argument in favour of the idea of a Catalan original; they might rather be an argument in favour of the supposition that the compositor was a Catalan. The conclusions drawn from the 'Catalanisms' in A B appear to become rather more fanciful when it is remembered that C, which was certainly derived from the same original as A B, contains only two examples of possibly Catalan words and these are both place-names.

Even were the suggestion that the 'Catalanisms' may be explained as the result of faulty printing to be rejected, it must be remembered that Columbus was not so well educated as to have been likely to have been free from the use of dialect words and forms. There is no doubt that the spoken language of Genoa at that time was very similar to that of Barcelona, and hence words which are apparently Catalan, such as *calavera* for *caravela*, may equally well be Genoese. If Columbus wrote the letter with his own hand, blunders in spelling and the appearance of words in common use among the sailors of the Mediterranean ports would be very probable. If it be supposed rather that he dictated the letter, it is doubtful whether, in view of the character of his crew, he could find a very highly educated amanuensis; it is the more doubtful because Rodrigo de Escovedo had been left at La Navidad.

It may be admitted that the style of the letter is unlike that of the other letters of Columbus, but this is no very strong argument in favour of the idea of a translation. It is certain that the letter, as preserved, has been subjected to editing; it is feasible to suggest that before it was printed, it was revised in such a way as to give its style that 'official' character which it was noted by Varnhagen as possessing.¹

¹ *La carta de Cristóbal Colón.*

A further objection to the hypothesis that Columbus wrote the original letter in Catalan is found in the fact that there is no trace of evidence that he was acquainted with that language. It is true that here and there in his other writings words can be found which may perhaps be Catalan. This, however, is no more than might be expected in the case of a man, not very well educated, who had long associated with sailors; the words may be most reasonably be regarded as examples of the *lingua franca* which has always been current in Mediterranean ports.

Nor is it difficult to find an explanation for the appearance of a Catalan version of the letter in the library of Ferdinand Columbus. The date which he gives in his entry is not necessarily to be regarded as that of the production of the copy; the Catalan edition may have been produced at a much later period. That the progress of discovery between the date of the first voyage of Columbus and that of the compilation of his son's catalogue should have aroused interest in a port such as Barcelona can hardly be regarded as surprising. If this interest led to the production of a version of the first account of the discovery in the language of that port, that might be expected. It is far less astonishing that there should be a Catalan, than that there should be a German version. No great importance need be attached to the statement in the Strassburg edition that it was translated from 'Catalan and Latin'. That statement may be explained as due to ignorance on the part of the translator, who associated the letter with Barcelona and therefore supposed that a language with which he was not very perfectly acquainted was Catalan; his imperfect knowledge of Castilian may be gathered from the fact that he had recourse to the Latin version.

The place at which A and B were printed cannot be exactly determined. It has been very generally held that A was printed in Spain and probably at Barcelona, while B was printed in Italy and probably at Naples. Spanish printing of A is strongly suggested by the appearance of the initial rr, and if A were printed in Spain at all, Barcelona becomes the most probable place of printing, since the letter was received,

and a press was in existence there. The 'Catalanisms' may be urged as an additional argument in favour of this view. On the other hand, De Lollis has pointed out that various hypotheses are possible.¹ It may be that A and B were both printed in Italy and perhaps from an editio princeps printed at Barcelona. A may be a Catalan version of an Italian edition and B an Italian version of A, in which some Catalanisms and Italianisms were omitted and other Italianisms inserted. The fact that the typically Italian 'stimabile' appeared in the undoubtedly Spanish C may argue that the Spanish text returned to Spain from Italy infected with Italianisms, the result of printing in Italy.

In addition to the four Spanish versions of the letter, some assistance for the reconstruction of the original text may be derived from:

(E) The material contained in Bernáldez.²

The account which Bernáldez gives of the first voyage of Columbus is somewhat sketchy and is cast into narrative form. It is, however, clear, as De Lollis has pointed out, that he had access to some version of the letter of Columbus which was not A B C, which gives a certain value to his account.

Of obviously less importance than the Spanish versions, but still of considerable importance, are the three Italian translations of the letter, all of which have been printed by De Lollis.³ They are:

(F) MS. in the Ambrosian Library.⁴

This version is incomplete, ending with the description of the unwarlike character of the natives of the islands, and thus consisting of something near one half of the letter.

(G) MS. in the National Library at Florence.⁵

This version is practically complete, but there are some gaps, due in the opinion of De Lollis to inability on the part of the translator to read the original MS.

¹ De Lollis (*op. cit.*, I. i, pp. lvi-lx).

² Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, c. 118.

³ De Lollis (*op. cit.*, I. i, pp. lxviii-lxxiii).

⁴ Vol. R. 113.

⁵ In the Codice già Stroziano. It bears the title: *Posteriori di Galileo*, tomo 33, *Accademia del Cimento, parte III, Carteggio*, vol. 18, *Miscellanee scientifiche*, I. cc. 132-134.

(H) MS. in the National Library at Florence.¹

This version omits the postscript added at Lisbon and ends with a summary of the last sentence of the letter proper. It is also marked by gaps similar to those in G.

De Lollis showed that more than one copy of the Spanish version of the letter was circulating in Italy, and that the translations were made from MSS. and not from A or B. These translations are therefore in a similar relationship to the lost copy of the original as are A and B.

Considerable importance also attaches to the Latin translation (I),² although it is no longer believed to be possible that the original letter was composed in that language. The translation was made by Leonardo de Cosco, an Aragonese, from a MS. and not from A or B. Leonardo (Berardo) de Carminis, bishop of Monte Peloso, in the Basilicate, caused the version to be printed, and nine editions appeared in Italy, at Paris, Basle and Antwerp in the course of the years 1493-1494.³ The question of the priority among these editions has been very exhaustively discussed;⁴ the balance of probability appears to be in favour of the order L (printed by Planck), S (printed by Silber), T (printed by Planck). It is, of course, obvious that the editions produced at Rome must have antedated those printed outside Italy.

There is finally:

(K) A metrical version in Italian.⁵

This was made by Giuliano Dati at Florence in 1493. He would seem to have been imperfectly acquainted with Spanish, and therefore utilized a Latin translation, which, however, was not that of Cosco. Certain peculiarities in the poem indicate that the MS. translated was one otherwise unknown.

In addition to the letter which has been preserved,

¹ Codice già Strozziiano, cc. 135-136.

² Printed by De Lollis (*op. cit.*, I. i, pp. 120-134), below the Spanish text of the letter.

³ The various editions are enumerated by De Lollis (*op. cit.*, I. i, pp. lx-lxi), by whom they are distinguished by the letters L to T.

⁴ Major dealt with the question in his *Select Letters of Columbus*: it is discussed also by Harris, *Notes on Columbus*; by 'M.K.' (*op. cit.*); by Thacher (*op. cit.* ii. 46 *et seq.*); and by De Lollis (*loc. cit.*).

⁵ Printed by Major (*op. cit.*), and in *Rac. Col.* (III. ii, pp. 8-25).

Columbus also sent a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, the original of which is lost and no copy of which exists. Varnhagen,¹ indeed, held that the extant document was in reality sent to the sovereign. He argued that Isabella objected to being known as the recipient of a letter in which allusion is made to the nudity of women and that she therefore caused the letter to be printed as if it had been sent to a royal official, the necessary changes of phraseology being made in it. This hypothesis, however, would appear to be incompatible with the wording of the first sentence of the extant document and with the postscript to that document. It is, indeed, somewhat fanciful. It is true that 'maidenly modesty' is noted by Pulgar as having been a marked characteristic of the queen, and that her possession of this quality is attested by others, but there is no reason to believe that it served to produce in her such an extreme of bashfulness. It may be added that of the extant versions, A B C bear an endorsement² which indicates that the letter which has been preserved either contained or was contained in a letter to the sovereigns. Between the two documents, while there was not identity, there was probably a strong similarity; it may be reasonably conjectured that the communication sent to the sovereigns was a general summary of a rather more detailed character than that which is extant. The reply of Ferdinand and Isabella to the letter has been preserved.³

It was long believed that a distinction should be drawn between the letter endorsed as having been sent to the 'escribano de racion' and that endorsed as having been sent to Gabriel Sanchez, the treasurer of Aragon. There was a very general opinion that the latter should be regarded as a revised version of the former. De Lollis, however, showed that any such distinction is fallacious, and that there is no ground for supposing that Columbus sent more than two letters.

There has been considerable controversy concerning the date at which the letters were composed, and the question cannot be regarded as settled beyond dispute. It has been

¹ *Carta de Cristóbal Colón*, p. xix.

² This endorsement reads: '*contenida a otra de Sus Altezas*' in A, B; '*e otra de Sus Altezas*' in C. It has been suggested that for *a* or *e*, *en* should be read.

³ Printed in Navarrete, ii, pp. 21-22.

urged that the letter to Ferdinand and Isabella was written at Lisbon,¹ the other letter having been already prepared. It is true that in the postscript, added after the *Niña* had entered the Tagus, Columbus seems to express his intention of writing to the sovereigns.² It is, however, hardly possible to believe that he prepared an account of his voyage for a royal official before he had drawn up a report for that official's master and mistress; it is still less possible to believe that if he had been guilty of such a breach of courtesy, he should have mentioned the fact in writing, and that in a document which might well reach the royal eye. The phrase in the postscript must apparently be taken in a somewhat less literal sense, meaning no more than that Columbus resolved at Lisbon to forward a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, in place of waiting until he should be again in a Castilian port.

Nor can it be well believed that the letters were not prepared until Columbus had reached the Tagus. It must be remembered that the rough weather experienced after leaving the Azores caused an entirely unexpected delay, and that when he left those islands, Columbus obviously anticipated that he would soon reach a Spanish harbour. There is every reason for supposing that he was anxious to send a report on his voyage at the earliest possible moment after that voyage was completed, and hence it must also be supposed that he had the report ready for dispatch as soon as he should arrive at a point from which it could be sent. This supposition becomes practically a certainty in view of the fact that the extant letter is dated 15 February and that it is only in the postscript that any reference is made to the stormy weather which had been experienced on the return voyage.

It follows that the letter must have been written either during the storm which began on 12 February and which reached its height on 14 February, or in that period of fair weather which prevailed from 17 January to 12 February. The later of these two possible periods has been very generally accepted as that of the composition of the letter.³ It is stated

¹ Thacher, *op. cit.* ii, p. 7.

² Cp. *infra*, p. 18.

³ Thacher (*loc. cit.*, note 2) is in error when he says that: 'The *Journal* distinctly states that it was written then.'

in the *Journal* that the occurrence of the storm of 12-14 February determined Columbus to compose a brief account of his voyage, in order that if the *Niña* were to be lost, and if the *Pinta* were also to fail to reach Spain, the success of his expedition might still become known to the sovereigns. This account is said to have been written on parchment, to have been placed in a sealed barrel and thrown overboard.¹ It is obvious enough that the document here mentioned cannot be identical with the extant letter; it can have been no more than the very briefest report. But it has been suggested that the danger in which he then found himself and his resultant fear that he might never reach port, led Columbus to write an account of his voyage. A somewhat picturesque description² has been given of the manner in which he spent his sleepless nights in writing, presumably consoling himself for his present distress by recalling to his mind the delights of the Indies. It is urged that this view of the date of composition accords with the opening sentence of the extant letter and with the date at its close.

On the other hand, to this view there are weighty objections. It is somewhat hard to discover in his expectation that he might not reach Spain a motive for the preparation of a report which would have presumably been lost with him if he had been wrecked. It must be supposed that during the storm Columbus was somewhat preoccupied; even if he were not directing the navigation and personally responsible for the safety of his vessel, the alarm which seems invariably to have filled his mind in a rough sea³ would almost certainly have deterred him from attempting literary composition. It may be suggested, although it would be unwise to insist upon this point, that in a ship of the type of the *Niña*, and in the midst of a violent storm, writing would have been almost

¹ This barrel has been periodically washed ashore or picked up by a passing vessel, and will doubtless continue to be so. One story of its finding deceived, or perhaps rather delighted, Lamartine (*Christophe Colomb*, pp. 194-196); another deceived Asensio (*Cristóbal Colón*, i, pp. 388-389). The thousand ducats, which, according to Ferdinand Columbus (c. 36), were to be paid to the finder of the barrel, have still to be earned.

² Cp. 'M.K.' (*op. cit.*, p. 6).

³ Cp. *infra*, vol. ii, pp. 16-18, pp. 74-76, *inter alia*.

a physical impossibility. The idea that it was not until the occurrence of the storm that Columbus thought of preparing a report on his voyage is little probable. It is hardly credible that he should have proposed to appear before Ferdinand and Isabella without having first announced his return; it may be added that, in actual fact, he did not proceed to their court until he had been invited or commanded to do so, and that for this invitation or command he would certainly seem to have waited with some anxiety. To deliver a formal report on his mission was his obvious duty, and it is improbable that he can at first have designed that full account, which is represented by the *Journal*, to be such a report.

The arguments which can be advanced in favour of the view that the date of composition should rather be placed in the period of fair weather would appear to be of some force. It is obvious that during this period there was abundant leisure for the composition of an account of the voyage, while that period was also the first opportunity for the discharge of a duty. The style of the letter suggests mental calm, disturbed only by pleasurable excitement. It is true that the extant version has been edited, but when every allowance has been made for this fact, it is still hard to believe that the original was prepared at a time when its author was in imminent peril of death. If, as is not unlikely, the actual writing of the letter was not the work of Columbus himself, but of an amanuensis, it becomes perhaps still more probable that it was composed in the fair weather period. On the whole, indeed, it seems that the view of De Lollis should be accepted, that the letter was written between 17 January and 11 February, and that the appearance of the date, 15 February, at its close merely indicates that the document was then sealed up.

The postscript, if Navarrete's explanation of the meaning of the word 'anima' be accepted,¹ was written on a separate sheet and inserted in the letter after it had been closed. From its contents, it is clear that it was written at Lisbon. The remark concerning the peculiarly stormy winter corresponds

¹ 'Anima llamában al papel escrito que se introducía en la carta despues de cerrada' (Navarrete, ii, p. 174, note 2).

very closely with an entry in the *Journal* which refers to the time when the *Niña* was in the Tagus.¹ The words, 'I ran here to-day into this port of Lisbon', equally indicate the same place of composition. The appearance of 14 March as the date of the postscript in A B C G H I would therefore seem to be an error; the date should be 4 March, since on 14 March Columbus was off Cape St. Vincent.²

The date at which the letters were dispatched has also been matter of dispute. That they were sent at the same time is indicated by the endorsement, 'contenida a otra de Sus Altezas', but it has been held that the place of dispatch was not Lisbon but Palos or Seville. It has been urged, in support of this view, that the true date of the postscript should be 14 March and that the sea route to Barcelona was faster than that by land. But it seems to be morally certain that the postscript should be dated 4 March, and it may be suggested that the recent experiences of Columbus had not been such as to suggest that it was wise to go by sea to Barcelona; he would appear to have intended at one time to do so, but to have abandoned that intention. It has further been urged that Columbus would have been unwilling to allow such a communication to pass through Portuguese territory. It is true that he had no reason to feel any very great confidence in Portuguese professions of goodwill;³ his distrust of Portuguese intentions is perhaps indicated by his rejection of the offer made by the king⁴ to allow him to proceed directly from Lisbon to the Spanish court. The extant letter, however, was not a document of such a character that knowledge of its contents would have been of value to the Portuguese or have added anything material to the information which they must have already gained from the crew of the *Niña*. It gives no indication of the route followed by Columbus or of the dis-

¹ The *Journal* (4 March) says: ' . . . donde supo de la gente de la mar que jamás hizo invierno de tantas tormentas, y que se avían perdido .25. naos en Flandes, y otras estaban allí que avía quatro meses que no avían podido salir.' The postscript (*infra*, p. 19) says: 'dizen aquí todos los hombres de la mar que jamás ovo tan mal yvierno ni tantas pérdidas de naves.'

² *Journal*, 14 March.

³ Cp. *Journal*, 19 February, 5 March.

⁴ Cp. *Journal*, 12 March.

tance travelled or even of the general direction of his voyage. There is no reason to suppose that the lost letter to Ferdinand and Isabella was more explicit, and hence it is hardly likely that there was in the mind of Columbus any objection to sending the documents by land from Lisbon. It has also been argued that Columbus could not have known where the sovereigns were residing, but the court had been at Barcelona since the previous May¹ and the recent attempt on the life of Ferdinand² would certainly have conveyed the news that he was in that city to all quarters of the peninsula. A somewhat stronger argument in favour of the view that the dispatch of the letters was delayed until the *Niña* arrived at Palos is supplied by the date of the reply of the sovereigns to the letter sent to them. The fact that this reply is dated 30 March led De Lollis to suggest that Columbus may have delayed to send his letters until 12 March, the time of his departure from Lisbon. If, however, he sent them from Lisbon at all, there seems to be no reason for supposing that he did not send them at the earliest possible moment, and the delay in the answer of the sovereigns would appear to be readily explicable. There was no need for their reply to be sent immediately; it would, indeed, have been useless to send it while Columbus was still at sea and while it could not be known to which Castilian port he would proceed, since even if he had announced his intention of making for Palos, stress of weather might well have driven him into some other harbour. That the sovereigns should have waited until they knew that the *Niña* had reached port, and even until they were sure that Columbus was not coming to Barcelona by sea, appears to be natural enough. It may be objected that even so the interval from 15 March, the date at which Columbus once more passed the bar of Saltes, and 30 March, the date of the answer of the sovereigns, can still hardly be explained except on the assumption that the letters were not sent until Palos had been reached. But the length of time which would have been occupied in the transmission of news from an obscure Andalusian port to Barcelona can be no more than approxi-

¹ Galindez Carvajal, in *Doc. Inéd. para la Historia de España*, vol. xviii, p. 280.

² The attempted assassination occurred on 6 December (Carvajal, *loc. cit.*).

mately estimated; a messenger sent by Columbus would perhaps not have secured the facilities which a royal messenger might have enjoyed or have travelled with that haste which the occasion might seem to demand. Nor, perhaps, was the reply of Ferdinand and Isabella hurriedly prepared; the fact that in it, for the first time, Columbus is accorded the title of admiral and given the style of Don suggests that the terms of the answer were somewhat carefully considered.

The alternative view that the letters were sent from Lisbon on the day on which the postscript is dated is supported by various considerations. The letter of Trotti¹ shows that the news of the return of Columbus reached Barcelona at an early date. The postscript is obviously hastily written, which suggests that it was composed at the moment of dispatch. It contains the statement that Columbus decided to write to the sovereigns from Lisbon. It may be further suggested that, quite apart from the fact that it was his duty to send a report as soon as possible, Columbus would have been naturally anxious to announce his success at once. He was by temperament ambitious and eager to acquire both fame and honours; every delay in making known his triumph meant delay also in his receipt of the promised rewards. There were also special circumstances to impel him to send his report at once. He had entered Lisbon, and his action in doing so was likely to be unwelcome to the sovereigns; to explain, as he does in the postscript, that he had been the victim of circumstances was advisable, in order to meet possible insinuations against his loyalty, insinuations which were, in fact, made.² An even stronger motive for sending his announcement immediately was supplied by his doubt concerning the attitude of Pinzón. While still in the Indies, Columbus had become suspicious of his lieutenant;³ during the storm, the *Pinta* had parted company with the *Niña* and since then he had heard nothing of her. To a man with the mentality of Columbus it would undoubtedly have seemed to be very probable that if Pinzón could gain the ear of the

¹ Cp. *Rac. Col.* III. i, p. 141.

² Cp. *infra*, p. 18, note 4

³ Cp. *Journal*, 21 Nov., 31 Dec., 3, 6, 8, and 10 Jan.

sovereigns first, he would endeavour to appropriate the fruits of the voyage, and to guard, as far as possible, against this was a natural effort to make. It may, therefore, with some assurance be concluded that the letters were sent from Lisbon on 4 March.

The character of the extant letter has, perhaps, not been hitherto justly appreciated. It has been assumed that it was a private communication sent by Columbus to a personal friend or to two personal friends, but in actual fact it was probably nothing of the kind. Varnhagen pointed out that the style of the letter is not that of a private, but of an official document; the note, 'contenida a otra a Sus Altezas', presents a difficulty which has not so far been satisfactorily solved, although that note perhaps suggests the true nature of the document. For the determination of that nature, it is important to remember that the extant letter does not bear the name of any addressee. All the texts, however, except H, carry endorsements,¹ added by the recipients, the copyists or the translators, descriptive of the document. A B C are thus described as having been sent to the 'escribano de racion', that is, to Luis de Santangel;² D and I as having

¹ These endorsements read as follows: (i) A B C. 'Esta carta embio Colom (B, Colon) al escrivano de racion de las islas halladas en las Indias contenida a otra (C, e otra) de Sus Altezas.' (ii) D. 'Carta del Almirante á Gabriel Sanchez.' (iii) F. 'Copia de una letra scritta dal armiralgio Colon del signor re de spagna laqual scrivo ala corte regal as certi consieri del signor re, mandata dal grane Tresorir del ditto signor in fiorenza al fratello Zoane Sanzio.' (iv) G. 'Copia della letera venuta di Spagna.' (v) I. 'Epistola Christofori Colom: . . . ad Magnificum dominum Raphaelem Sanxis (*in other editions*, Gabrielem Sanches): eiusdem serenissimi Regis Tesaularium missa. . . .' No real importance can be attached to the error in the name of Sanchez in some of the Latin editions. At that period it was by no means uncommon to find the names Raphael and Gabriel confused, while Cosco, as an Aragonese, not unnaturally used the Aragonese form, Sanxis, for the Castilian, Sanchez.

² Luis de Santangel was a member of a family of *conversos*, originating from Zaragoza, who had adopted the name Santangel in place of their original name, Chinillo, upon their conversion from the Jewish faith. He was the son of another Luis de Santangel, a merchant, who had important financial dealings with Juan II of Aragon, the father of Ferdinand the Catholic. Luis de Santangel himself was probably born at Calatayud, but removed to Valencia, of which city he is described as a native, and later to Barcelona, where he was in charge of a branch of the business founded by his father. In 1478 he relinquished his mercantile career and entered the royal service, becoming *escribano de ración* three years later. The duty of this official was to keep a register of the names and salaries of

been sent to Sanchez,¹ the treasurer of Aragon; F as the copy of a letter 'ad certi consieri,' and G as a copy 'della lettera venuta di Spagna.' The identity of the addressee is thus not really revealed by the endorsements, since it cannot be supposed that Columbus sent three letters in addition to that to Ferdinand and Isabella.

There is nothing intrinsically improbable in the idea that Columbus should have written early news of his success to Santangel, to whom he was greatly indebted, but there seems to be no reason why he should at the same time and in the same manner have written to Sanchez. The suggestion of Varnhagen² that the treasurer was acting as *escribano de racion ad interim* cannot be entertained, nor is it possible to suppose that the name of the treasurer should have appeared without any warrant for doing so. The statement in the endorsement on F that the letter was sent by him to his brother³ in Florence is sufficiently explicit to show that at an early date a copy of the letter was certainly in the possession of the treasurer. A further difficulty lies in the fact that Columbus is not likely to have been guilty of so great a breach of etiquette as that involved in the dispatch of news of

all persons employed in the royal palace; an inventory of jewels, arms, clothes, and other contents of the palace; a book giving the daily expenditure of the royal household, and a record of the salaries paid and of gifts made from the royal purse. While holding this office, Santangel continued to engage in financial business on his own account and seems to have amassed a considerable fortune. The exact date of his death appears to be unknown, but he was still *escribano de racion* in 1498. His share in securing the acceptance of the proposals of Columbus is well known. He is not to be confused with another Luis de Santangel, who was involved in a charge of heresy in 1449. (Cp. Serrano y Sanz, *Origenes de la Dominación Española en América*, vol. i, pp. lxxv-cll).

¹ Gabriel Sanchez was also of *converso* origin. His uncle is said to have been named Alazar Usuf; his father, who, on baptism, assumed the name of Pedro Sanchez, was a notary at Calatayud. His mother was a converted Jewess of Tortosa. Luis Sanchez, his elder brother, became treasurer of Aragon in 1474, and Gabriel became his deputy in the following year, succeeding to the office of treasurer at some date between 1479 and 1481. Some of his relatives were concerned in the murder of St. Pedro Arbués, inquisitor of Aragon, in 1485, and for a time the position of Gabriel Sanchez was one of peril. Although cleared of any suspicion of complicity in the murder, he withdrew from court and took up his residence at Zaragoza, although he continued to be treasurer until his death at Segovia in 1505. He was succeeded in his office by his son, Luis. (Cp. Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, pp. clii-exxvi).

² *Carta de Cristobal Colón*, p. xx.

³ Juan Sanchez, a merchant.

his discovery to a royal official at the same time as to that official's master and mistress; it is, indeed, very unlikely that he would have sent that news to anyone until he had been authorized by the sovereigns to do so.

In view of these, and of other similar considerations, it may be suggested that the truth is most nearly stated in the endorsement to F, and that the letter was really a draft semi-official dispatch, enclosed in the letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, for publication by them if they so desired. They caused copies to be made which were distributed both in Spain and Italy. This view of the character of the document is borne out both by its 'official' style and by the fact that it so studiously abstains from supplying any information which could be of service to any who might wish to encroach upon an area which Ferdinand and Isabella proposed to maintain as their own preserve. It removes the difficulty created by the varying endorsements, all of which appear to be equally authentic, and it accounts for the rapid dissemination of the news of the discovery.¹

It is certain that in the process of copying, and before it was printed, the letter was subjected to some editing, the exact extent and nature of which cannot be determined. There is, however, reason to believe that this revision was made by explicit royal command, since to the original there was one addition which can hardly be otherwise explained. In A B C the signature 'El Almirante' appears, a signature which is somewhat unintelligently elaborated in the Latin translation.² Columbus, however, could not have described

¹ For the elaboration of the argument here summarized, cp. *The Letter of Columbus, announcing the results of his First Voyage*, in the *Hispanic American Historical Review* (Feb. 1930).

² 'Christoforus Colom, oceaneæ classis prefectus.' This 'signature' is obviously no more than an addition by the translator. Columbus never used his name in signing any letter or document, or, indeed, upon any other occasion, so far as is known. He could not have described himself as 'admiral' at a date earlier than that at which he received the royal letter of 30 March 1493, and by that time the MS. from which Cosco translated was, in all probability, already in Italy. Even if it be supposed that it was not, and that Columbus sent it himself to Italy, he could not have described himself as 'admiral' of a 'fleet'. A Castilian admiral of the period was not the admiral of a fleet, but of an area; as Fadrique Enríquez was 'almirante de Castilla', so Columbus became 'almirante del mar oceano'. It cannot be supposed that Cosco translated 'mar' by 'classis'.

himself as 'El Almirante' in February 1493, in a letter which was in any case intended to reach a royal official and which would probably come to the notice of the sovereigns themselves. For the title was not his to use. In the *Capitulations* of Santa Fé he had asked that he should be created admiral in those islands, lands, and seas which he was setting out to discover, and in the grant made at Granada he was promised that he should receive this position in event of success. But the title was not formally conferred upon him until the grant was confirmed at Barcelona in 1493, although it was implicitly granted to him when he was addressed by it in the letter of the sovereigns of 30 March 1493. It cannot be supposed that Columbus should have risked incurring royal displeasure by assuming a style before that style had been accorded to him, and it follows that the signature to A B C and also to the MS. from which I was translated must have been inserted either after 30 March 1493 or if at an earlier date, then by royal command. The fact that copies of the latter were in print perhaps as early as April 1493, and still more the fact that versions were so soon circulating in Italy, makes it highly probable that the work of copying was undertaken as soon as the letter was received at Barcelona. That it should have been is more likely than not, since there was no reason for delay. The style of the letter generally also suggests revision by an editor; it is not improbable that the work was performed by Santangel, whose Aragonese origin would account for the appearance or retention of a certain number of 'Catalanisms'.

It has been generally assumed that the lost original of the letter was in the autograph of Columbus, but the validity of this assumption may be questioned. While there is no evidence that he actually wrote the letter with his own hand, there are reasons for believing that he did not. Its style is unlike that of his undoubted compositions; on the whole, the Castilian is purer and more fluent. Editing may, indeed, account to some extent for this, but it seems hardly to account for it entirely. It is, however, impossible to suppose that

Thacher (*op. cit.*, ii, p. 14 and note 3) allowed his sense of the dramatic to carry him away, when he regarded this 'signature' as authentic.

Columbus at the time of his first voyage was capable of writing in a clear and fluent style, while by the time of his third voyage he could express himself only in what Las Casas calls his 'homely language'. It is rather more likely that the reverse was the case, while it is by no means certain that in 1493 he was able to write in any language. If it would be dangerous to assume that the original letter was not a holograph, it would be perhaps more dangerous to assume that it was.

The letter has been frequently reprinted and has been many times translated. It was included, with a translation, by Major in his *Select Letters of Columbus*, edited for the Hakluyt Society. At that date, A had not yet been discovered and Major based his text upon B, corrected by reference to D, F, and K. For the present edition, the text printed by De Lollis, in the *Scritti di Colombo*, has been adopted and the letter has been newly translated.

2. *Letter of Dr. Chanca*

(pp. 20-72)

Ferdinand Columbus¹ states that his father kept journals of each of his voyages and Bernáldez² refers to 'a book' made by the admiral and describing, if not the whole of the second voyage, at least the exploration of the coasts of Cuba and Jamaica. No trace of these records, however, is to be found, and the account of the second voyage must be drawn from sources other than Columbus himself. It is narrated by Ferdinand Columbus,³ by Las Casas,⁴ by Peter Martyr Angleria,⁵ and by Bernáldez,⁶ as well as by Nicolo Syllacio⁷ and Michele de Cuneo.⁸ There is finally an account written by Dr. Diego Alvarez Chanca, who was physician to the fleet.

This letter was first printed by Navarrete,⁹ who appended to it the following note:¹⁰

'Copied from a codex which is in the possession of the Royal

¹ Ferdinand Columbus, c. 87.

² Cp. *infra*, p. 158.

³ Ferdinand Columbus, cc. 44-69.

⁴ Las Casas, i. 84-99.

⁵ Peter Martyr Angleria, *Decades*, i. Bk. 2-3.

⁶ Bernáldez, cc. 119-131.

⁷ *Rac. Col.* III. ii, pp. 83-94.

⁸ *Rac. Col.* III. ii, pp. 95-107.

⁹ Navarrete, i, pp. 198-224.

¹⁰ Navarrete, i, p. 224.

Academy of History. It was written in the middle of the sixteenth century and was part of a collection of papers, relating to the Indies, formed by Fray Antonio de Aspa, a Jeronomite of the monastery of la Mejorada, near Olmedo. The codex consists of thirty-three leaves; the first seventeen contain the first and second books of the *Decades* of Peter Martyr Angleria, translated into Castilian. In the first book various additions have been interpolated by the translator who wrote between the years 1512 and 1514. The second book is an almost literal translation. From the seventeenth leaf to the thirty-first comes the earlier account by Dr. Chanca; the document has not been previously edited. Don Manuel Avilla made a copy of it which is found in the collection of Don J. B. Muñoz, and which I have had before me to compare with the original in Madrid, 12 June 1807.'

To the letter, as printed by Navarrete, there is prefixed the following note, presumably written by Aspa:¹ 'Concerning this second voyage, Peter Martyr wrote to Rome in Latin, and as a certain doctor, called Chanca, a native of Seville, went on the voyage and in the fleet by command of the Catholic sovereigns, and from there wrote to the lords of the cabildo of Seville that which happened there and that which he saw, I place below this the copy of his letter, although the two accounts are almost identical. But the one relates that which he heard and he of Seville that which he saw, and the two accounts are not contradictory, and one omits to relate some small matter which the other records, and since some are more pleasing in their manner of telling a story than are others, there follows the letter of the said Dr. Chanca which he wrote to the city of Seville concerning this second voyage in the manner following.'

At the end of the letter, a further note, also no doubt written by Aspa, is appended:²

'So far is the copy of that which refers to news from those parts and Indies. The remaining contents of the letter is not to the point, since it deals with personal matters which the said Dr. Chanca, as a native of Seville, asked and gave as a commission to the members of the cabildo of Seville, relating

¹ Navarrete, i, p. 198.

² Navarrete, i, p. 224.

to the property and people that he had left in the said city, and this arrived at Seville in the month of . . . in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-three.'

The Spanish text of Navarrete and an English translation of the letter were included by Major in his *Select Letters of Columbus*. For the present edition, the text printed by Major has been utilized and newly translated.

3. *Memorandum of Columbus, sent to Ferdinand and Isabella, by Antonio de Torres*

(pp. 74-113)

Allusion is made to the memorial concerning Española, which Columbus sent to Spain by Antonio de Torres, in the *Historie of Ferdinand Columbus*¹ and by Las Casas.² It was utilized by Oviedo.³ De Torres was the bearer of other documents as is proved by the contents of this memorandum and by the letter of the sovereigns to Columbus, 14 August 1494.⁴

Only one MS.⁵ of the memorial is known to exist; it is in the Archives of the Indies at Seville. The replies of Ferdinand and Isabella appear in the margin. From the inventory of the contents of the chest at Las Cuevas, made at the request of Baldassare Colombo by the Council of the Indies, it would appear that the original was still in existence at the close of the sixteenth century, or at least an early copy of the original. In the inventory, it is stated that the document was signed with the cypher of Columbus and the words 'El Almirante', in a manner similar to that which appears at the end of the letter to Gorricio, 26 February 1501, also in the chest at Las Cuevas. De Lollis argues that the fact that the memorial was so signed proves that Columbus used his cypher as early as 1494, but to this argument it may be objected that the document at Las Cuevas may have been no more than a copy of the original. The fact that it is stated to have been signed in a manner not otherwise adopted by Columbus, except in the

¹ Ferdinand Columbus, c. 51.

² Las Casas, i. 89.

³ Oviedo, ii. 48.

⁴ Navarrete, ii, p. 152.

⁵ Cp. De Lollis, *op. cit.* (*Rac. Col.* I. i, pp. ciii-cvi).

case of documents of no earlier date than 1498, suggests that to that period the Las Cuevas copy of the memorial should be assigned. It further seems to be improbable that Ferdinand and Isabella should have returned the memorandum to Columbus; it would more naturally have been retained in the royal archives. De Lollis holds that the original was in the autograph of Columbus, but the entry concerning the document at Las Cuevas in the inventory seems rather to suggest that it was in the handwriting of a clerk.¹ In any case, it cannot be definitely asserted that the original was a holograph of the admiral. The style of the document rather favours the view that it was prepared from dictated materials.

The memorandum was first printed by Navarrete.² Major included the Spanish text of Navarrete and an English translation in his *Select Letters of Columbus*. For the present edition, the text printed by De Lollis has been used and the document newly translated.

4. *Andrés Bernáldez, 'Historia de los Reyes Católicos', c. 123-31*
(pp. 114-167)

Dr. Chanca's account of the second voyage ends with the foundation of Isabella, and he supplies no information concerning the exploration of the coasts of Cuba and Jamaica, on which Columbus entered 24 April 1494 and from which he returned to Española on 29 September 1494. Accounts of this expedition are given by Ferdinand Columbus,³ Las Casas,⁴ and Peter Martyr Angleria,⁵ and by Andrés Bernáldez.

Such knowledge as is possessed concerning the life of Bernáldez is almost entirely derived from his own work. The

¹ The entry in question reads: 'Ay una instrucción, que suena ser dada por el almirante don Christoval, á Antonio de Torres capitan de la nao Marigalante y alcayde de la ciudad Isabela, fecha en la Isabela a .30. de enero de .94. ay una firma en ella con unas cifras, y, por letra, el almirante' (Memorial del Pleyto, c. 57 A-). The fact that in this copy the title of alcaide of Isabella is given to de Torres may also suggest that it was not the original document, since he did not receive that position officially until the provisional appointment by Columbus had been confirmed by Ferdinand and Isabella: that confirmation was later than the memorandum (cp. *infra*, p. 96).

² Navarrete, i, pp. 225-241.

³ Ferdinand Columbus, c. 53-59.

⁴ Las Casas, i. 94-99.

⁵ Peter Martyr Angleria, Dec. i. Bk. 2.

date of his birth is unknown, but he was a native of Fuentes in Leon and the grandson of a notary public. In 1488 he became cura of Los Palacios, near Seville, a position which he still held in 1513. He was also chaplain to Diego de Deza, who was archbishop of Seville, confessor to Ferdinand the Catholic, a member of the royal council, and grand inquisitor. He was on friendly terms with Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, marquis of Cadiz, one of the heroes of the Moorish war, and had for him a whole-hearted admiration; his character sketch of the marquis might be justly described as 'the portrait of a Castilian gentleman'.¹ Bernáldez was also on friendly terms with Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca and with Columbus, both of whom were at one time his guests;² he would seem to have known the future admiral in the period immediately following his arrival in Spain from Portugal.³ The date of his death is unknown, but it was perhaps 1513, in which year his history ends abruptly.

In his own pages, Bernáldez clearly reveals his personal character. He was a man of simple mind and ingenuous, delighting in pomp and ceremony,⁴ and with some appreciation of beauty. He was kind-hearted and discharged the duties of his office as a parish priest with commendable zeal.⁵ His kindness, however, was not proof against the intolerant spirit of his age; he was filled with a lively hatred for the false *conversos*, for Jews and for Moors;⁶ he gloried in the revival of the Inquisition,⁷ and rejoiced to think that Ferdinand and Isabella had 'delivered the heretics to the flames, in which with good cause and by the decision of the Church, they have been burned and do burn and shall burn, in living flames until they be no more'.⁸ As might be expected he had a firm belief in the miraculous and loved to hear of marvels; he had obviously devoured with enthusiasm the pages of Mandeville. He was sufficiently credulous, recording, as sober fact, the birth of a remarkable monstrosity at Ravenna. The extent of his intellectual attainments may be gathered from his remark that, since the eclipse of the sun on 29 July

¹ Cp. c. 104.² Cp. *infra*, p. 116.³ Cp. c. 118.⁴ Cp. cc. 32, 33, 80.⁵ Cp. c. 200.⁶ Cp. cc. 43, 110-114.⁷ Cp. c. 44.⁸ Cp. c. 7.

1478, 'the sun has never regained its full brightness nor have days ever been so fine as they were before'.¹

His *Historia de los Reyes Católicos* extends from the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella to the year 1513. He has placed on record the circumstances in which he was led to undertake its composition.

'I who write these chapters of memories,' he says,² 'being then twelve years of age, was reading a register which had belonged to my dead grandfather, who was a notary public of the town of Fuentes, in the encomienda mayor of Leon, where I was born. In that book, I found some entries describing notable events which had occurred in his time, and my widowed grandmother, his wife, being almost in extreme old age, hearing me read them, said: "Child, why do not you so write the events of this present time, as they are? For to do so would be no idle task. If you write of the good things that come to pass in your days, those who come after will know of them and, marvelling as they read of them, will give thanks to God." And from that day, I undertook to do this, and when I had come to a riper understanding, I many times told myself, "If God give me life and health, and I live, I will write until that day which shall see the kingdom of Granada become pasturage for the herds of the Christians." And that I had always hope of seeing, and I have seen it as those who are now alive have seen it and heard it; to the Lord Jesús Christ be great thanks and praise given.'

His history is unpretentious both in style and matter. Bernáldez assuredly was not inclined 'to exercise himself in great matters which were too high for him', and it would be vain to search his pages for any account of the constitutional development of the reign of the Catholic sovereigns. In general, he narrates events without commenting upon them, save when his feelings are strongly aroused; he is moved to something akin to real emotion by the death of Ponce de Leon and by that of Isabella,³ while his anger is kindled by the thought of the villainy of the *conversos*. His history is obviously most valuable for events which were within his

¹ Cp. c. 34.

² Cp. c. 7.

³ For his appreciation of Isabella, see c. 201.

personal knowledge or of which he had heard accounts from his friends; it is a most important source for the narrative of the Moorish war, concerning some events in which he undoubtedly received information from Ponce de Leon, and of some incidents in which he was certainly an eyewitness.¹ He makes little use of documents, although at the close of his history he gives some letters addressed by Ferdinand to Diego de Deza. His honesty is undoubted; he frankly reveals his likes and dislikes, his contempt and his admiration, and he never conceals his prejudices, but he never wilfully distorts the truth.

His account of Columbus is uneven.² He sketches the first voyage somewhat hurriedly, although he supplies some details not found elsewhere; his description of the third and fourth voyages is perfunctory. On the second voyage, however, he is very full, his account of it being derived, as he says, partly from Dr. Chanca and others who had been present on it, and partly from Columbus himself, who left with him certain papers'.³ For that part of the voyage which closed with the foundation of Isabella, Bernáldez in essence reproduces the letter of Dr. Chanca;⁴ his account of the exploration of the coasts of Cuba and Jamaica,⁵ however, is independent, although very similar to that given by Peter Martyr Angleria.

To this account a special interest attaches. Of the other writers who describe the voyages of Columbus, men like Chanca and Peter Martyr were frequenters of courts; Cuneo was the reverse of unsophisticated; Ferdinand Columbus, Las Casas and Oviedo wrote at a time when the value of the discoveries and their nature were much better understood. It is only from the pages of Bernáldez that it is possible to gather the impression made by the discovery upon an ordinary man, of simple mind and simple tastes and habits. To Bernáldez, the interest of the events of which he heard is analogous to that of Pigafitta in those which he saw. He cares little for the increase of knowledge of the surface of the globe, for the wealth to be won from the newly found lands, for the

¹ E.g. the siege of Malaga (c. 83).

² His account of Columbus is contained in cc. 118-131.

³ C. 118.

⁴ C. 131.

⁵ Cc. 119-131.

political advantages that may be gained. Despite his religious character, he is not deeply interested in the work of conversion. It is the wonder and strangeness of everything in this new world that excites him; it is in curious customs and incidents that he takes delight. To him also, the beauty of nature made a strong appeal, and it may be reasonably conjectured that here he found himself in the fullest accord with Columbus and that those passages in which the loveliness of the islands is described are almost reports of the table talk of the admiral. As the account of the later part of the second voyage is read, it is easy to picture the scene in the house at Los Palacios, to see Columbus eagerly descanting upon that which so fired his poetic nature, to see Bernáldez eagerly listening and at moments encouraging the narrator to continue, perhaps to see also Fonseca in the background, listening with a somewhat cynical smile. If it were only because Bernáldez so represents one, and that perhaps the most attractive side of the character of Columbus, his account of the second voyage would be well worth reading.

Seven MSS. of the *Historia de los Reyes Católicos* are in existence; six are apparently derived from one which is in the possession of the Biblioteca Colombiana, with which the contents of the others agree, although the chapters are differently numbered.¹ The work was printed at Granada in 1856, at Seville in 1870, and at Madrid in 1878.² So much of it as deals with the later part of the second voyage of Columbus was printed by De Lollis in the *Scritti di Colombo*.³ In 1838 the Massachusetts Historical Society published an English translation of the chapters concerning Columbus;⁴ this translation would appear to have been made from a very faulty copy of the MS. since it is disfigured by numerous blunders. No other English version of Bernáldez would seem to have appeared. For the present edition, the text printed by De Lollis has been utilized and it has been newly translated.

¹ Cp. Ballester, *Fuentes Narrativas de la Historia de España durante la Edad Moderna*, i, pp. 49-50.

² The text of the 1870 edition is marred by numerous blunders in transcription; that of 1878, in the *Colección Rivadeneira*, is somewhat better, but poorly printed.

³ De Lollis, *op. cit.* (*Rac. Col.* I, i, pp. 235-265).

⁴ *Collections*, series 3, vol. 8.

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SELECT DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATING
THE FOUR VOYAGES OF
COLUMBUS

VOL. I

FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

*Letter of Columbus.*¹

SIR, As I know that you will be pleased at the great victory with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how in thirty-three days,² I passed from the Canary Islands³ to the Indies⁴ with the fleet which the most illustrious king and queen,⁵ our sovereigns, gave to me. And there I found very many islands filled with people innumerable, and of them all I have taken possession⁶ for their highnesses, by proclamation made and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me.⁷ To the first island which I found, I gave the name *San Salvador*,⁸ in remembrance of the Divine Majesty, Who has marvellously bestowed all this; the Indians call it 'Guanahani'.⁹ To the second, I gave the name *Isla de Santa María de Concepción*; ¹⁰ to the third, *Fernandina*; ¹¹ to the fourth, *Isabella*; ¹² to the fifth, *Isla Juana*,¹³ and so to each one I gave a new name.

¹ Cp. Introduction, p. cxxiii *et seq.*

² 'twenty' in the folio letter, an error no doubt due to illegible handwriting in the original, 'xxxiii' being read as 'veinte'. He left Gomera on 6 Sept., but was becalmed from 6 Sept. to 8 Sept., only beginning the final stage of his voyage on the latter date. 'Thirty-three days' thus represents the period between leaving the Canaries and reaching Guanahani.

³ Inés Peraza and her husband, Diego de Herrera, had recognized the suzerainty of Ferdinand and Isabella over the Canaries in 1477, and in the same year the Portuguese renounced all claims to the islands. The conquest of Grand Canary for Castile was begun in 1479 and completed in 1483; Palma had just been subdued by Alfonso de Lugo when Columbus reached the Canaries. Teneriffe was not acquired for Castile until 1496.

⁴ Cp. Introduction, p. lxix *et seqq.*

⁵ In the first Latin translation of the letter of Columbus, the admiral is described as having been sent by the king, the queen not being mentioned. Harisse (*Christophe Colomb*, ii. 18) found in this an attempt on the part of the translator, Leandro Cosco, to secure the credit of the discovery for Aragon alone, but it is more probable that it was either the result of hasty printing or the outcome of that reluctance to admit the equality of Isabella, which is found even in so patriotic a Castilian as Andrés Bernáldez (cp. especially, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, c. 87).

⁶ Cp. *Journal*, 11 Oct. 1492.

⁷ For a description of the standards borne by Columbus, see *Journal*, 11 Oct. 1492.

⁸ The landfall of Columbus has been variously placed at Cat Island, Grand Turk, Mariguana and Watling Island; the last identification is now generally

PRIMER VIAGE DE COLÓN

Carta de Colón

SEÑOR, porque sé que avréis plazer de la gran vitoria que Nuestro Señor me ha dado en mi viaje, vos escribo esta, por la qual sabréys como en .xxxiii. días pasé de las islas de Canaria á las Indias con la armada que los ilustrísimos rey é reyna nuestros señores me dieron, donde yo fallé muy muchas islas pobladas con gente sin número; y d'ellas todas he tomado posesión por Sus Altezas con pregón y vandera real estendida, y no me fué contradicho. á la primera que yo fallé puse nombre 'San Salvador', á conmemoración de Su Alta Magestad, el qual maravillosamente todo esto ha dado; los Indios la llaman 'Guanahaní'; á la segunda puse nombre 'la isla de Santa María de Concepción'; á la tercera 'Fernandina'; á la quarta 'la Ysabela'; á la quinta 'la isla Juana', é así á cada una nombre nuevo.

accepted (cp. Cronau, *The Discovery of America and the Landfall of Columbus*, pp. 1-31). For the motives which led Columbus to select the names which he gave to these islands, see Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, i. 44. García de la Riega (*Colón, español*, p. 129 et seq.) argued that, while in this instance the motive for giving the name 'Salvador' was religious, that name was afterwards given, as were many others, in memory of Galicia.

* Rivas Puigcerver (*Los Judíos en el Nuevo Mundo*) declared that this was not really the native name of the island, but was thought to be so owing to a misunderstanding of a dialogue conducted in Hebrew between Rodrigo de Triana (more accurately Juan Rodríguez Bermejo) and another Jewish sailor. His statement was based on a story which first appeared in Mexico in the seventeenth century. Rodrigo de Triana was not a Jew, nor did the Spanish Jews of the period talk Hebrew (cp. Serrano y Sanz, in *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos*, 30, pp. 326-31).

¹⁰ Identified with Rum Cay (Cronau, pp. 32-3). Ulloa (*Xristo-Ferens Colom y Fernando el Católico*, p. 95 et seq.) finds in this name an illustration of the influence of 'Lullism' on Columbus and a reference to the probable name of his mother.

¹¹ Identified with Long Island (Cronau, pp. 39-42).

¹² Identified with Crooked Island (Cronau, pp. 39-42). The name appears as 'la Isla Bella' in the folio letter, but there is no reasonable doubt that the island was named in honour of the queen, as Fernandina had been named in honour of the king, and as Juana was named in honour of prince Juan.

¹³ Cuba. Ulloa (*La Genèse de la Découverte de l'Amérique*, p. 27) argues that Columbus in so naming Cuba really wished to perpetuate his own name, Juan Baptista; he finds in the later attempt of Ferdinand to change the name to Fernandina the outcome of the king's fear that the real name and true origin of Columbus might be recalled (cp. *Geographical Journal*, Jan. 1929).

FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

When I reached Juana, I followed its coast to the westward, and I found it to be so extensive that I thought that it must be the mainland, the province of Catayo.¹ And since there were neither towns nor villages on the seashore, but only small hamlets, with the people of which I could not have speech, because they all fled immediately, I went forward on the same course, thinking that I should not fail to find great cities and towns. And, at the end of many leagues, seeing that there was no change and that the coast was bearing me northwards, which I wished to avoid, since winter was already beginning and I proposed to make from it to the south, and as moreover the wind was carrying me forward, I determined not to wait for a change in the weather and retraced my path as far as a certain harbour known to me. And from that point, I sent two men inland to learn if there were a king or great cities. They travelled three days' journey and found an infinity of small hamlets and people without number, but nothing of importance. For this reason, they returned.²

I understood sufficiently from other Indians, whom I had already taken, that this land was nothing but an island. And therefore I followed its coast eastwards for one hundred and seven leagues to the point where it ended.³ And from that cape, I saw another island, distant eighteen leagues from the former, to the east, to which I at once gave the name 'Española'.⁴ And I went there and followed its northern coast, as I had in the case of Juana, to the eastward for one hundred and eighty-eight great leagues in a straight line.⁵ This island and all the others are very fertile to a limitless degree, and this island is extremely so. In it there are many harbours on the coast of the sea, beyond comparison with others which I know in Christendom, and many rivers, good and large, which is marvellous. Its lands are high, and there are in it very many sierras and very lofty mountains, beyond comparison with the island of Teneriffe.⁶ All are most

¹ Columbus, despite his statement later in this letter (cp. *infra*, p. 12, etc.), long remained in doubt concerning the character of Cuba, and was not convinced that it was an island until some time in 1494 (cp. *Geog. Journal*, March 1929).

² Rodrigo de Xerez and Luis de Torres. The latter was a Jew and understood Hebrew, Chaldee, and a little Arabic (*Journal*, 4 Nov. 1492). Keyserling (*The First Jew in America*) is in error in supposing that de Torres afterwards

PRIMER VIAGE DE COLÓN

Quando yo llegué á la Juana, seguí yo la costa d'ella al poniente, y la fallé tan grande que pensé que sería tierra firme, la provincia de Catayo. y como no fallé así villas y lugares en la costa de la mar, salvo pequeñas poblaciones, con la gente de las quales no podía haver fabla, porque luego fuýan todos, andava yo adelante por el dicho camino, pensando de no errar grandes ciudades ó villas; y, al cabo de muchas leguas, visto que no havía innovación, y que la costa me llevaba al setentrion, de adonde mi voluntad era contraria, porque el yvierno era ya encarnado, y yo tenía propósito de hazer d'él al austro, y también el viento me dió adelante, determiné de no aguardar otro tiempo, y bolví atrás fasta un señalado puerto, de adonde enbié dos hombres por la tierra, para saber si havía rey ó grandes ciudades. andovieron tres jornadas, y hallaron infinitas poblaciones pequeñas y gente sin número, mas no cosa de regimiento; por lo qual se bolvieron.

Yo entendía harto de otros Indios, que ya tenía tomados, como continuamente esta tierra era isla; é así seguí la costa d'ella al oriente ciento y siete leguas fasta donde fazía fin. del qual cabo ví otra isla al oriente, distante d'esta diez é ocho leguas, á la qual luego puse nombre la 'Española', y fuí allí, y seguí la parte del setentrion, así como de la Juana al oriente, .clxxxviii. grandes leguas por linia recta; la qual y todas las otras son fertilísimas en demasiado grado, y esta en extremo. en ella ay muchos puertos en la costa de la mar, sin comparación de otros que yo sepa en cristianos, y fartos rios y buenos y grandes, que es maravilla. las tierras d'ella son altas, y en ella muy muchas sierras y montañas altísimas, sin comparación de la ysla de Teneryfe; todas ferosísimas,

settled in Cuba. He was one of those killed at La Navidad (cp. Gould y Quincy, *Nueva Lista Documentada de los Tripulantes de Colón*, Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia, 90, p. 541).

³ Ulloa (*La Genèse*, &c., p. 17) supposes that Columbus refrained from prosecuting the exploration of Cuba because he was anxious to reach Española, to which island he had already been in 1477.

⁴ Española was first sighted 5 Dec. 1492.

⁵ Presumably leagues of four miles each, making the total distance 702 miles. The greatest length of the island is actually 400 miles (cp. *infra*, p. 12, note 2).

⁶ The highest peak in the island has an altitude of 10,300 feet; the peak of Tenerife has an altitude of 12,200 feet.

FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

beautiful, of a thousand shapes, and all are accessible and filled with trees of a thousand kinds and tall, and they seem to touch the sky. And I am told that they never lose their foliage,¹ as I can understand, for I saw them as green and as lovely as they are in Spain in May, and some of them were flowering, some bearing fruit, and some in another stage, according to their nature. And the nightingale was singing and other birds of a thousand kinds in the month of November there where I went. There are six or eight kinds of palm, which are a wonder to behold on account of their beautiful variety, but so are the other trees and fruits and plants. In it are marvellous pine groves, and there are very large tracts of cultivatable lands, and there is honey, and there are birds of many kinds and fruits in great diversity. In the interior are mines of metals, and the population is without number.² Española is a marvel.

The sierras and mountains, the plains and arable lands and pastures, are so lovely and rich for planting and sowing, for breeding cattle of every kind, for building towns and villages. The harbours of the sea here are such as cannot be believed to exist unless they have been seen, and so with the rivers, many and great, and good waters, the majority of which contain gold.³ In the trees and fruits and plants, there is a great difference from those of Juana. In this island, there are many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.

The people of this island, and of all the other islands which I have found and of which I have information, all go naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them, although some women cover a single place with the leaf of a plant or with a net of cotton which they make for the purpose.⁴ They have no iron or steel or weapons, nor are they fitted to use them, not because they are not well built men and of handsome stature, but because they are very marvellously timorous. They have no other arms than weapons made of canes,

¹ Oviedo (*Historia General y Natural de las Indias*, ix. 21) says that there were only four or five trees in the Indies which lost their leaves, and regards it as one of the most notable characteristics of the trees in that part of the world.

² For the botany of Española, see Oviedo, Bks. vii–xi. Oviedo says that the pine cones were valueless (ix. 2). For the mines, see Oviedo (vi. 8). Las Casas

PRIMER VIAGE DE COLÓN

de mill fechuras, y todas andables, y llenas de árboles de mill maneras y altas, y parece que llegan al cielo; y tengo por dicho que jamás pierden la foja, según lo puedo comprender, que los ví tan verdes y tan hermosos como son por mayo en España, y d'ellos estavan floridos, d'ellos con fruto, y d'ellos en otro término, según es su calidad; y cantava el ruiseñor y otros paxaricos de mill maneras en el mes de noviembre por allí donde yo andava. ay palmas de seis ó de ocho maneras, que es admiración verlas, por la diformidad fermosa d'ellas, mas así como los otros árboles y frutos é yervas. en ella ay pinares á maravilla é ay campiñas grandísimas, é ay miel, y de muchas maneras de aves, y frutas muy diversas. en las tierras ay muchas minas de metales, é ay gente in estimable número. la Española es maravilla; las sierras y las montañas y las vegas y las campiñas, y las tierras tan fermosas y grúesas para plantar y sembrar, para criar ganados de todas suertes, para hedeicios de villas é lugares. los puertos de la mar aquí no havría creencia sin vista, y de los rios muchos y grandes, y buenas aguas, los más de los quales traen oro. en los árboles y frutos é yervas ay grandes diferencias de aquellas de la Juana. en esta ay muchas especierías, y grandes minas de oro y de otros metales.

La gente d'esta ysla y de todas las otras que he fallado y he avido noticia, andan todos desnudos, hombres y mugeres, así como sus madres los paren, aunque algunas mugeres se cobijan un solo lugar con una foja de yerva ó una cofia de algodón que para ellos fazen. ellos no tienen fierro, ni azero, ni armas, ni so(n par)a ello, no porque no sea gente bien dispuesta y de fermosa estatura, salvo que son muy te(merosos) á maravilla. no tienen otras armas salvo las armas de las cañas, quando est(án) con la simiente, á (la) qual ponen al cabo

(ii. 18, 42) estimated the population of Española at some three or four millions. The most probable estimate is rather under than over two hundred thousand (cp. Peschel, *Das Zeitalter der Entdeckungen*, p. 430).

³ This statement, made at this time, was pure conjecture, as is the case with many other statements in the letter.

⁴ Bernáldez (c. 118), probably expressing the opinion of Columbus himself, suggests that only pregnant women covered themselves. Oviedo (v. 3) says that virgins went entirely uncovered, and this statement is confirmed by Peter Martyr (*Opus Epistolarum*, Ep. 156), where the words 'mulieres corruptas' are clearly not used in their ordinary sense.

FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

cut in seeding time, to the ends of which they fix a small sharpened stick. And they do not dare to make use of these, for many times it has happened that I have sent ashore two or three men to some town to have speech, and countless people have come out to them, and as soon as they have seen my men approaching they have fled, even a father not waiting for his son. And this, not because ill has been done to anyone; on the contrary, at every point where I have been and have been able to have speech, I have given to them of all that I had, such as cloth and many other things, without receiving anything for it; but so they are, incurably timid. It is true that, after they have been reassured and have lost their fear, they are so guileless and so generous with all they possess, that no one would believe it who has not seen it. They never refuse anything which they possess, if it be asked of them; on the contrary, they invite anyone to share it, and display as much love as if they would give their hearts, and whether the thing be of value or whether it be of small price, at once with whatever trifle of whatever kind it may be that is given to them, with that they are content. I forbade that they should be given things so worthless as fragments of broken crockery and scraps of broken glass, and ends of straps, although when they were able to get them, they fancied that they possessed the best jewel in the world. So it was found that a sailor for a strap received gold to the weight of two and a half *castellanos*,¹ and others much more for other things which were worth much less. As for new *blancas*,² for them they would give everything which they had, although it might be two or three *castellanos*' weight of gold or an *arroba*³ or two of spun cotton. . . . They took even the pieces of the broken hoops of the wine barrels and, like savages, gave what they had, so that it seemed to me to be wrong and I forbade it. And I gave a thousand handsome good things, which I had brought, in order that they might conceive affection, and more than that, might become Christians and be inclined to the love and service of their highnesses and of the whole Castilian nation, and strive to aid us and to give us of the things which they have in abundance and which are necessary to us. And they do not know any creed and are not idolaters;⁴

PRIMER VIAGE DE COLÓN

un palillo agudo; é no osan usar de aquellas; que m(uchas) vezes me (a a) caescido embiar á tierra dos ó tres hombres (á) alguna villa, para haver fabl(a, y) salir á (ellos d'ellos) sin número; y después que los veýan llegar fuýan, á no aguardar padre á hijo; y esto no porque á ninguno se aya hecho mal, antes, á todo cabo adonde yo aya estado y podido haver fabla, les he dado de todo lo que tenía, así paño como otras cosas muchas, sin recebir por ello cosa alguna; mas son así temerosos sin remedio. verdad es que, después que se aseguran y pierden este miedo, ellos son tanto sin engaño y tan liberales de lo que tienen, que no lo creería sino el que lo viese. ellos de cosa que tengan, pidiéndogela, jamás dizen de no; antes, convidan la persona con ello, y muestran tanto amor que darían los corazones, y, quier sea cosa de valor, quier sea de poco precio, luego por qualquiera cosica, de qualquiera manera que sea que se le dé, por ello se an contentos. yo defendí que no se les diesen cosas tan civiles como pedazos de escudillas rotas, y pedazos de vidrio roto, y cabos de agugetas, aunque, quando ellos esto podían llegar, les parecía haver la mejor joya del mundo; que se acertó haver un marinero, por una agugeta, de oro peso de dos castellanos y medio, y otros, de otras cosas que muy menos valían, mucho más; ya por blancas nuevas davan por ellas todo quanto tenían, aunque fuesen dos ni tres castellanos de oro, ó una arrova ó dos de algodón filado. . . . fasta los pedazos de los arcos rotos, de las pipas tomavan, y davan lo que tenían como bestias; así que me pareció mal, é yo lo defendí, y dava yo graciosas mill cosas buenas, que yo levava, porque tomen amor, y allende d'esto se fazan cristianos, y se inclinen al amor é servicio de Sus Altezas y de toda la nación castellana, é procuren de ayuntar é nos dar de las cosas que tienen en abundancia, que nos son

¹ The weight of gold in the coin which, in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, was worth 490 silver maravedis, calculated to be equivalent to $6\frac{1}{4}$ pence. The weight has been estimated at 46 decigrammes.

² A copper coin, worth half a maravedi, i.e. $\cdot 125$ of a halfpenny.

³ 25 lb. at 14 oz. to the lb.: 11 kil. 522 gr.

⁴ Las Casas (i. 40) bases upon this testimony of the admiral his comparison of the Indians with the Seres, described by Pliny and others, and his belief that they were perhaps even free from the taint of original sin. Their mythology is described by Fray Ramón, who was sent by Columbus to investigate their beliefs and whose report is preserved by Ferdinand Columbus (*Historie*, c. 183).

FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

only they all believe that power and good are in the heavens, and they are very firmly convinced that I, with these ships and men, came from the heavens, and in this belief they everywhere received me, after they had overcome their fear. And this does not come because they are ignorant; on the contrary, they are of a very acute intelligence and are men who navigate all those seas, so that it is amazing how good an account they give of everything, but it is because they have never seen people clothed or ships of such a kind.

And as soon as I arrived in the Indies, in the first island which I found, I took by force some of them,¹ in order that they might learn and give me information of that which there is in those parts, and so it was that they soon understood us, and we them, either by speech or signs, and they have been very serviceable.² I still take them with me, and they are always assured that I come from Heaven, for all the intercourse which they have had with me; and they were the first to announce this wherever I went, and the others went running from house to house and to the neighbouring towns, with loud cries of, 'Come! Come to see the people from Heaven!' So all, men and women alike, when their minds were set at rest concerning us, came, so that not one, great or small, remained behind, and all brought something to eat and drink, which they gave with extraordinary affection. In all the island, they have very many canoes,³ like rowing *fustas*,⁴ some larger, some smaller, and some are larger than a *fusta* of eighteen benches. They are not so broad, because they are made of a single log of wood, but a *fusta* would not keep up with them in rowing, since their speed is a thing incredible. And in these they navigate among all those islands, which are innumerable, and carry their goods. One of these canoes I have seen with seventy and eighty men in her, and each one with his oar.

In all these islands, I saw no great diversity in the appearance of the people or in their manners and language. On the

¹ Las Casas (i. 46) argues that the forcible taking of these natives was wholly unjustifiable, and finds in this incident the beginning of the maltreatment of the Indians.

² On his return journey to Spain, Columbus took with him several Indians, of whom only seven survived the voyage. One of these acted as interpreter on the second voyage. (Cp. Las Casas, i. 77, Peter Martyr, i. 1, and *infra*, p. 122.)

necesarias. y no conocían ninguna seta nin idolatría: salvo que todos creen que las fuerças y el bien es en el cielo, y creían muy firme que yo con estos navíos y gente venía del cielo, y en tal catamiento me recebían en todo cabo, después de haver perdido el miedo. y esto no procede porque sean ignorantes, salvo de muy sutil ingenio y hombres que navegan todas aquellas mares, que es maravilla la buena cuenta qu'ellos dan de todo; salvo porque nunca vieron gente vestida ni semejantes navíos.

Y luego que legué á las Indias, en la primera isla que hallé tomé por fuerça algunos d'ellos, para que deprendiesen y me diesen noticia de lo que avía en aquellas partes, é así fué que luego entendieron, y nos á ellos, quando por lengua ó señas; y estos han aprovechado mucho. oyen día los traigo que siempre están de propósito que vengo del cielo, por mucha conversación que ayan avido conmigo; y estos eran los primeros á pronunciarlo adonde yo llegava, y los otros andavan corriendo de casa en casa y á las villas cercanas con bozes altas: 'venid, venid á ver la gente del cielo'; así, todos, hombres como mugeres, después de haver el corazón seguro de nos, venían que no quedavan grande ni pequeño, y todos traían algo de comer y de beber, que davan con un amor maravilloso. ellos tienen en todas las yslas muy muchas canoas, á manera de fustas de remo, d'ellas mayores, d'ellas menores; y algunas son mayores que una fusta de diez é ocho bancos. no son tan anchas, porque son de un solo madero; mas una fusta no terná con ellas al remo, porque van que no es cosa de creer. y con estas navegan todas aquellas islas que son innumerables, y tratan sus mercaderías. alguna d'estas canoas he visto con .lxx. y .lxxx. hombres en ella, y cada uno con su remo.

En todas estas islas no vide mucha diversidad de la fechura de la gente, ni en las costumbres ni en la lengua; salvo que todos se entienden, que es cosa muy singular para lo que

³ Cp. *Journal*, 26 Oct. and 22 Dec. 1492. For the significance probably attached by Columbus to the number of canoes in the islands, cp. his notes on Marco Polo (especially Nos. 213-16, 220, 221-3) (in *Raccolta Colombiana*, I. ii. 446 et seq.).

⁴ A *fusta* was a light-oared vessel of not more than three hundred tons. Some *fustas* had one or two masts, lateen rigged. The Spaniards occasionally fixed masts to the native canoes (cp. *infra*, vol. II, p. 130).

FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

contrary, they all understand one another, which is a very curious thing, on account of which I hope that their highnesses will determine upon their conversion to our holy faith, towards which they are very inclined.¹

I have already said how I have gone one hundred and seven leagues in a straight line from west to east along the sea-shore of the island Juana, and as a result of that voyage, I can say that this island is larger than England and Scotland together,² for, beyond these one hundred and seven leagues, there remain to the westward two provinces to which I have not gone. One of these provinces they call 'Avan',³ and there the people are born with tails; and these provinces cannot have a length of less than fifty or sixty leagues, as I could understand from those Indians whom I have and who know all the islands.

The other, Española, has a circumference greater than all Spain,⁴ from Colibre,⁵ by the sea-coast, to Fuenterrabia in Vizcaya, since I voyaged along one side one hundred and eighty-eight great leagues in a straight line from west to east. It is a land to be desired and, seen, it is never to be left. And in it, although of all I have taken possession for their highnesses and all are more richly endowed than I know how, or am able, to say, and I hold them all for their highnesses, so that they may dispose of them as, and as absolutely as, of the kingdoms of Castile, in this Española, in the situation most convenient and in the best position for the mines of gold and for all intercourse as well with the mainland here as with that there, belonging to the Grand Khan, where will be great trade and gain, I have taken possession of a large town, to which I gave the name *Villa de Navidad*,⁶ and in it I have made fortifications and a fort, which now will by this time be entirely finished, and I have left in it sufficient men⁷ for such a purpose with arms and artillery and provisions

¹ Columbus afterwards discovered that there was much diversity of language (cp. *infra*, p. 88). For his remark that it was curious that they should understand one another, cp. his note 319 on Pierre d'Ailly, *Imago Mundi* (Rac. Col. I. ii. p. 398).

² The estimated area of Cuba is 43,000 square miles; that of England alone is 50,874 square miles.

³ Cp. *infra*, p. 138. The district was otherwise known as Magón, and seems to have stretched across the narrow part of the island from the north coast to the

PRIMER VIAGE DE COLON

Espero que determinarán Sus Altezas para la conversión d'ellos á nuestra santa fe, á la qual son muy dispuestos.

Ya dixé como yo havía andado .cvii. leguas por la costa de la mar por la derecha liña de ocidente á oriente por la isla Juana, según el qual camino puedo dezir que esta isla es mayor que Inglaterra y Escocia juntas; porque, allende d'estas .cvii. leguas, me quedan de la parte de poniente dos provincias que yo no he andado, la una de las quales llaman 'Avan', adonde nasce la gente con cola; las quales provincias no pueden tener en longura menos de .l. ó .lx. leguas, según pude entender d'estos Indios que yo tengo, los quales saben todas las yslas.

Esta otra Española en cierto tiene más que la España toda, desde Colivre, por costa de mar, fasta Fuenterravia en Viscaya, pues en una quadra anduve .clxxxviii. grandes leguas por recta línea de occidente á oriente. esta es para desear, é, v (ista), es para nunca dexar; en la qual, puesto (que de to) das tenga toma(d)a posesión por Sus Altezas, y todas sean más abastadas de lo que yo sé y puedo dezir, y todas las tengo por de Sus Altezas, qual d'ellas pueden disponer como y tan complidamente como de los reynos de Castilla, en esta Española, en el lugar más convenible y mejor comarca para las minas del oro y de todo trato así de la tierra firme de aquí como de aquella de allá del gran can, adonde havrá gran trato é ganancia, he tomado posesión de una villa grande, á la qual puse nombre la 'villa de Navidad'; y en ella he fecho fuerza y fortaleza, que ya á estas horas estará del todo acabada, y he dexado en ella gente que abasta para semejante fecho, con armas y artellarias é vituallas por más de un año, y

south. 'Avan' suggests Havana, which was the native name of a province (cp. Las Casas, iii. 31).

⁴ The estimated circumference of Española is c. 1500 miles: the coastline of Spain and Portugal is c. 1,900 miles.

⁵ Collioure, in Roussillon; modern department of Pyrénées-Orientales. Ulloa, (*Xristo-Ferens Colon*, p. 101) suggests that this comparison proves that Columbus was intimately acquainted with the coast of Cataluña.

⁶ On Puerto Real, the modern bay of Caracol. (Cp. *Journal*, 26 Dec., 28 Dec., and 2 Jan.)

⁷ The number of men left by Columbus at La Navidad is given as 38 by Peter Martyr (*Decades*, i. 1, 2) and Oviedo (ii. 6, 12); as 39 in the *Journal* (2 Jan. 1493), Las Casas (i. 64), and Ferdinand Columbus (c. 52); and as 40 by Bernáldez (c. 118). Navarrete (*Colección de los Viajes*, ii. 18-20) printed what

FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

for more than a year, and a *fusta*, and one, a master of all sea-craft, to build others, and great friendship with the king of that land,¹ so much so, that he was proud to call me, and to treat me as, a brother. And even if he were to change his attitude to one of hostility towards these men, he and his do not know what arms are and they go naked, as I have already said, and are the most timorous people that there are in the world, so that the men whom I have left there alone would suffice to destroy all that land, and the island is without danger for their persons, if they know how to govern themselves.²

In all these islands, it seems to me that all men are content with one woman, and to their chief or king they give as many as twenty.³ It appears to me that the women work more than the men. And I have not been able to learn if they hold private property; what seemed to me to appear was that, in that which one had, all took a share, especially of eatable things.⁴

In these islands I have so far found no human monstrosities, as many expected,⁵ but on the contrary the whole population is very well-formed, nor are they negroes as in Guinea, but their hair is flowing, and they are not born where there is intense force in the rays of the sun; it is true that the sun has there great power, although it is distant from the equinoctial line twenty-six degrees. In these islands, where there are high mountains, the cold was severe this winter, but they endured it, being used to it and with the help of meats which they eat with many and extremely hot spices. As I have found no monsters, so I have had no report of any, except in an island 'Quaris',⁶ the second at the coming into the Indies, which is inhabited by a people who are regarded in all the islands as very fierce and who eat human flesh. They have many canoes with which they range through all the islands

he imagined to be a list of those left in the island, making the total 43: but he was in error in his idea of the document which he used, and the real number is 39 (cp. Gould y Quincy, *B.A.H.*, vol. 85, p. 151). In the list given by Navarrete, an Irishman, Guillermo Ires, 'natural de Galney, en Irlanda', and an Englishman, Tallarte de Lajes, appear, but they do not figure in any authentic records of the companions of Columbus on his first voyage. It is probable that the loss of the *Santa Maria* made it necessary to leave some men behind, but there is no reason to suppose either that those left were the crew of the lost vessel or that their number corresponded to that of her crew. Oviedo (ii. 12) says that Columbus wished to leave enough men to guard against the possi-

fusta, y maestro de la mar en todas artes para fazer otras, y grande amistad con el rey de aquella tierra, en tanto grado, que se preciava de me llamar y tener por hermano, é, aunque le mudase la voluntad á ofender esta gente, él ni los suyos no saben qué sean armas, y andan desnudos, como ya he dicho, é son los más temerosos que ay en el mundo; así que solamente la gente que allá queda es para destroir toda aquella tierra; y es ysla sin peligros de sus personas, sabiéndose regir.

En todas estas islas me parece que todos los hombres sean contentos con una muger, y á su mayoral ó rey dan fasta voynte. las mugeres me parece que trabaxan más que los hombres. ni he podido entender si tienen bienes propios; que me pareció ver que aquello que uno tenía todos hazían parte, en especial de las cosas comederas.

En estas islas fasta aquí no he hallado hombres mostrudos, como muchos pensavan, mas antes es toda gente de muy lindo acatamiento, ni son negros como en Guinea, salvo con sus cabellos corredíos, y no se crían adonde ay ímpeto demasiado de los rayos solares; es verdad qu'el sol tiene allí gran fuerça, puesto que es distante de la linia equinoccial veinte é seis grados. en estas islas, adonde ay montañas grandes, ay tenía fuerça el frio este yvierno; mas ellos lo sufren por la costumbre, y con la ayuda de las viandas que comen con especias muchas y muy calientes en demasía. así que monstruos no he hallado, ni noticia, salvo de una ysla 'Quaris', la segunda á la entrada de las Yndias, que es poblada de una gente que

ility that some might die, and that he was unable to spare more than he did spare.

¹ Guacanagari, according to Las Casas. The name is given as Goacanagari (Oviedo), Goachanari (de Cuneo), Guacanari (Bernáldez), and Guaccanarillus or Guadeanarillus (Peter Martyr).

² The nervousness which Columbus betrays concerning the probable fate of those whom he had left at La Navidad is noteworthy (cp. *The Administration of the Colons in Española, Proceedings of the Twenty-First International Congress of Americanists* (first part), p. 393).

³ Oviedo (v. 3) says somewhat cynically that an Indian was content with one woman when he could not afford to keep more.

⁴ The lack of any conception of *meum* and *tuum* appeared during the expedition of Columbus to Cibao; it led to a misunderstanding between the natives and the Spaniards. (Las Casas, i. 90; Ferdinand Columbus, c. 50.)

⁵ Cp. *Imago Mundi*, c. 12, a passage annotated by Columbus (note 48: *Rac. Col.* I. ii. 380). ⁶ Either Dominica or Maria Galante (cp. *infra*, p. 32, note 1).

of India and pillage and take as much as they can. They are no more malformed than the others, except that they have the custom of wearing their hair long like women, and they use bows and arrows of the same cane stems, with a small piece of wood at the end, owing to lack of iron which they do not possess. They are ferocious among these other people who are cowardly to an excessive degree, but I make no more account of them than of the rest. These are those who have intercourse with the women of 'Matinino', which is the first island met on the way from Spain to the Indies, in which there is not a man.¹ These women engage in no feminine occupation, but use bows and arrows of cane, like those already mentioned, and they arm and protect themselves with plates of copper, of which they have much.

In another island, which they assure me is larger than Española, the people have no hair. In it, there is gold incalculable, and from it and from the other islands, I bring with me Indians as evidence.

In conclusion, to speak only of that which has been accomplished on this voyage, which was so hasty, their highnesses can see that I will give them as much gold as they may need, if their highnesses will render me very slight assistance; moreover, spice and cotton, as much as their highnesses shall command; and mastic, as much as they shall order to be shipped and which, up to now, has been found only in Greece, in the island of Chios,² and the Seignory sells it for what it pleases; and aloe wood, as much as they shall order to be shipped, and slaves, as many as they shall order to be shipped and who will be from the idolaters.³ And I believe that I have found rhubarb and cinamon,⁴ and I shall find a thousand other things of value, which the people whom I have left there will have discovered, for I have not delayed at any point, so far as the wind allowed me to sail, except in the town of Navidad, in order to leave it secured and well established, and in truth, I should have done much more, if the ships had served me, as reason demanded.

¹ Martinique. For lands entirely inhabited by women, cp. notes of Columbus on *Historia Rerum Ubique Gestarum* (e.g. notes 190 *et seq.*), of Pius II (*Rac. Col.* I. ii. 311 *et seq.*). It may be added that Streicher (*Die Kolumbus-Originale*) holds that none of the notes to Pius II are in the autograph of Columbus.

tienen en todas las yslas por muy ferozes, los quales comen carne humana. estos tienen muchas canoas, con las quales corren todas las yslas de India, y roban y toman quanto pueden; ellos no son más disformes que los otros, salvo que tienen costumbre de traer los cabellos largos como mugeres, y usan arcos y flechas de las mismas armas de cañas, con un palillo al cabo, por defecto de fierro que no tienen. son ferozes entre estos otros pueblos que son en demasiado grado covardes, mas yo no los tengo en nada más que á los otros. estos son aquellos que tratan con las mugeres de 'Matinino', que es la primera ysla, partiendo de España para las Indias, que se falla, en la qual no ay hombre ninguno. ellas no usan exercicio femenino, salvo arcos y flechas, como los sobredichos, de cañas, y se arman y cobigan con launas de arambre, de que tienen mucho.

Otra ysla me aseguran mayor que la Española, en que las personas no tienen ningún cabello. en esta ay oro sin cuento, y d'esta y de las otras traigo conmigo Indios para testimonio.

En conclusión, á fablar d'esto solamente que se a fecho este viage, que fué así de corrida, pueden ver Sus Altezas que yo les daré oro quanto ovieren menester, con muy poquita ayuda que Sus Altezas me darán; agora, especiería y algodón quanto Sus Altezas mandarán, y almástiga quanta mandarán cargar, é de la qual fasta oy no se ha fallado salvo en Grecia, en la ysla de Xío, y el Señorío la vende como quiere, y lignáloe quanto mandarán cargar, y esclavos quantos mandarán cargar, é serán de los ydólatras; y creo haver fallado ruybarvo y canela, é otras mill cosas de sustancia fallaré, que havrán fallado la gente que yo allá dexo; porque yo no me he detenido ningún cabo, en quanto el viento me aya dado lugar de navegar; solamente en la villa de Navidad, en quanto dexé asegurado é bien asentado. é, á la verdad, mucho más ficiera, si los navíos me sirvieran como razón demandava.

² Cp. *Journal*, 12 Nov. and 11 Dec. 1492. It is conjectured that Columbus visited Chios in 1474-5. The island had been acquired by the Genoese in 1346; the trade in mastic was in the hands of a company, the 'Albergo degli Justiniani', which had been tributary to the Ottomans since 1453. The island was eventually taken by the Turks in 1566.

³ The idea of securing slaves from the Indies appears to have been constantly present in the mind of Columbus: at a later date, he elaborated a scheme for the elopment of a slave trade (cp. *infra*, pp. 88, 90, and Las Casas, i. 151).

This is enough . . .¹ and the eternal God, our Lord, Who gives to all those who walk in His way triumph over things which appear to be impossible, and this was notably one; for, although men have talked or have written of these lands, all was conjectural,² without suggestion of ocular evidence, but amounted only to this, that those who heard for the most part listened and judged it to be rather a fable than as having any vestige of truth. So that, since Our Redeeiner has given this victory to our most illustrious king and queen, and to their renowned kingdoms, in so great a matter, for this all Christendom ought to feel delight and make great feasts and give solemn thanks to the Holy Trinity with many solemn prayers for the great exaltation which they shall have, in the turning of so many peoples to our holy faith, and afterwards for temporal benefits, for not only Spain but all Christians will have hence refreshment and gain.

This, in accordance with that which has been accomplished, thus briefly.

Done in the caravel,³ off the Canary Islands,⁴ on the fifteenth of February, in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-three.

At your orders.

El Almirante.

After having written this, and being in the sea of Castile, there came on me so great a south-south-west wind, that I was obliged to lighten ship. But I ran here to-day into this port of Lisbon,⁵ which was the greatest marvel in the world, whence I decided to write to their highnesses. In all the Indies, I have always found weather like May; where I went in thirty-three days and I had returned in twenty-eight, save for these storms which have detained me for fourteen days, beating about in this sea. Here all the sailors say that never has there been so bad a winter nor so many ships lost.

Done on the fourth day of March.⁶

¹ Lacuna in the original.

² Cp. *infra*, vol. II, p. 32.

³ A caravel was a vessel of mobility and was of two types: the 'Portuguese' which had only lateen sails and which could navigate five or six points to the wind, and the 'Castilian' which had sometimes both square and lateen sails, when the foresail was a square sail, and sometimes square sails only. The term 'caravel', however, was used rather loosely, and often less in reference to the type of ship than to the purpose for which she was being used.

PRIMER VIAGE DE COLON

Esto es harto . . . y eterno Dios Nuestro Señor, el qual da á todos aquellos que andan su camino victoria de cosas que parecen imposibles ; y esta señaladamente fué la una ; porque, aunque d'estas tierras ayan fablado ó escripto, todo va por conjetura sin allegar de vista, salvo comprendiendo atanto, los oyentes los más escuchavan é juzgavan más por fabla que por poca cosa d'ello. así que, pues Nuestro Redentor dió esta victoria á nuestros ilustrísimos rey é reyna é á sus reynos famosos de tan alta cosa, adonde toda la christiandad deve tomar alegría y fazer grandes fiestas, y dar gracias solemnes á la Sancta Trinidad con muchas oraciones solemnes por el tanto enxalçamiento que havrán, en tornándose tantos pueblos á nuestra sancta fe, y después por los bienes temporales ; que no solamente la España, mas todos los christianos ternán aquí refrigerio y ganancia.

Esto, según el fecho, así en breve.

Fecha en la caravela, sobre las yslas de Canaria, á .xv. de febrero, ano mil .cccclxxxiii.

Fará lo que mandaréys

El almirante.

Después d'esta escripto, y estando en mar de Castilla, salió tanto viento conmigo sul y sueste, que me ha fecho descargar los navíos. pero corrí aquí en este puerto de Lisboa oy, que fué la mayor maravilla del mundo, adonde acordé escribir á Sus Altezas. en todas las Yndias he siempre hallado los temporales como en mayo ; adonde yo fuý en .xxxiii. días, y volví en .xxviii., salvo qu'estas tormentas me an detenido .xiii. días corriendo por este mar. dizen aquí todos los hombres de la mar que jamás ovo tan mal yvierno ni tantas pérdidas de naves.

Fecha á .iiii. días de marzo.

⁴ Cp. *Journal*, 15–17 Feb. 1493. Columbus was actually off Santa María, one of the Azores.

⁵ Fernandez Duro (*Pinzón en el Descubrimiento de las Indias*, p. 116) points out that, as the wind was SSW., Columbus could have made for any port in northern Spain, as Pinzón actually did, and that he must have gone to Lisbon by choice. It is clear that his action in doing so caused some suspicion (cp. *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 62).

⁶ For the date of this postscript, and for the endorsement on the cover, cp. *ibid.*, Introduction, p. cxxxv et seq.

SECOND VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

1. *Letter of Dr. Chanca, written to the City of Seville.*¹

MOST NOBLE SIR: Since the matters which I write privately to others in other letters cannot be made so generally known as those which go in this communication, I have decided to write the news from here separately from other matters which I have to request of your lordship. And the news is as follows.

The fleet which, by divine permission, the Catholic sovereigns, our lords, sent from Spain to the Indies, under the command of Christopher Columbus, their admiral of the Ocean Sea, left Cádiz on the twenty-fifth of September, in the year . . .,² the weather and wind being favourable for our journey.

The weather so continued for two days, during which we were able to make about fifty leagues. Afterwards the weather turned against us for two more days, in which time we made little or no progress. When those days were passed, it pleased God that fair weather set in for us, so that in two days more we reached Grand Canary, where we put into port, which was necessary for us to do in order to repair a ship which had made much water. We remained there all that day and afterwards set out, on the following day, and were somewhat becalmed, so that we were four or five days in reaching Gomera. And at Gomera we were obliged to remain for some while, in order to provide ourselves with as much meat, wood, and water as we could for the long journey which we expected to make without again sighting land.³

So with our stay at these ports and owing to our being becalmed for a day after leaving Gomera, which delayed us, we

¹ For the letter, cp. *supra*, Introduction, p. cxliii. Diego Alvarez Chanca, a native of Seville, was an eminent doctor and had been physician to the princess. As he wished to go to the Indies and as his services would be of value, Ferdinand and Isabella arranged with Columbus that he should go as physician to the fleet and that he should receive the salary which he had received in Spain (cp. Letter, 23 May 1493: *Nacurrete*, ii. p. 54). The *contadores* were ordered to pay Chanca while he was in the Indies. Bernáldez drew largely upon Chanca for his account of the second voyage of Columbus and mentions his indebtedness to the doctor (see c. 119, 120, 123).

SEGUNDO VIAGE DE COLÓN

1. *La Carta del Doctor Chanca, que escribió a la Ciudad de Sevilla.*

MUY MAGNIFICO SEÑOR: Porque las cosas que yo particularmente escribo á otros en otras cartas no son igualmente comunicables como las que en esta escritura van, acordé de escribir distintamente las nuevas de acá y las otras que á mi conviene suplicar á vuestra Señoría, é las nuevas son las siguientes: Que la flota que los Reyes Católicos, nuestros Señores, enviaron de España para las Indias é gobernacion del su Almirante del mar Océano Cristóbal Colón por la divina permission, parte de Caliz á veinte y cinco de Setiembre del año de . . . años con tiempo é viento conveniente á nuestro camino, é duró este tiempo dos dias, en los cuales pudimos andar al pie de cincuenta leguas; y luego nos cambió el tiempo otros dos, en los cuales anduvimos muy poco ó no nada; plogó á Dios que pasados los dias nos tornó buen tiempo, en manera que en otros dos llegamos á la Gran Canaria donde tomamos puerto, lo cual nos fue necesario por reparar un navío que hacia mucha agua, y estovimos ende todo aquel dia, é luego otro dia partimos é fizonos algunas calmerías, de manera que estovimos en llegar al Gomera cuatro ó cinco dias, y en la Gomera fue necesario estar algun dia por facer provisiones de carne, leña é agua la que mas pudiesen, por la larga jornada que se esperaba hacer sin ver mas tierra: ansi que en la estada destos puertos y en un dia despues de partidos de la Gomera, que nos fizo calma, que tardamos en

* 1493. The year is missing in the MS.

" According to Michele de Cuneo (*Rac. Col.* III. ii. 96), the delay at Gomera was to some extent due to a love affair between Columbus and 'the lady of the island'. This lady was Beatriz de Bobadilla, widow of Fernan Perraza, and ruler of the island as guardian of her young son, Guillem Perraza. She would appear to have retained her power of attraction to a much later date and to have been a lady of no little character. She was known as 'the huntress' (cp. Millares, *Historia general de las Islas Canarias*, vol. IV, pp. 142 ff.). Columbus had made the acquaintance of the lady on his first voyage (cp. *Journal*, 9 Aug. 1492: where her name is wrongly given as Inés Perraza, who was her mother-in-law).

SECOND VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS

were nineteen or twenty days in arriving at the island of Ferro. From here, by the goodness of God, we had fair weather, the best which a fleet ever experienced on so long a voyage, so that having left Ferro on the thirteenth of October, within twenty days we sighted land, and we should have sighted it in fourteen or fifteen days if the flagship had been as good a sailer as the other vessels, for on many occasions the other ships shortened sail because they were leaving us so far behind. During all this time we experienced much good fortune, for in it and during the whole voyage we encountered no storm, except on the eve of St. Simon, when there was one which for four hours put us in great peril.

On the first Sunday after All Saints, which was the third day of November, about daybreak, a pilot of the flagship cried, 'Largess! Land in sight!' The delight of the crews was so great that it was extraordinary to hear the cries and exclamations of pleasure which all made, and it was with good reason, for the people were so wearied with bad living and with pumping out water that they all sighed most anxiously for land. On that day some of the pilots of the fleet reckoned about eight hundred leagues from the island of Ferro to the first land which we sighted, others reckoned seven hundred and eighty, so that there was no great difference;¹ and the further three hundred which they reckoned from the island of Ferro to Cádiz made the total one thousand one hundred. So I do not think that anyone had not seen enough water!

On the morning of the Sunday before mentioned, we saw an island lying ahead of the ships,² and afterwards another³ came in sight on the right hand. The first was high and mountainous on the side which we saw; the other was flat and also covered with dense woods. And as soon as it grew lighter, islands began to appear on one side and on the other, so that in the course of that day six islands were seen in different directions and most of them very large.⁴ We steered directly to examine the one which we had first sighted and

¹ Ferro is 18° W.; Dominica, the first land sighted, is 61° 20' W.

² Dominica: so named because discovered on a Sunday (Las Casas, i. 84).

³ María Galante (Marie Galante): so named from the flagship of Columbus (Las Casas, *ibid.*). Castilian ships in this period generally bore three names, of

SEGUNDO VIAGE DE COLÓN

llegar fasta la isla del Fierro, estovimos diez y nueve ó veinte dias: desde aqui por la bondad de Dios nos tornó buen tiempo, el mejor que nunca flota llevó tan largo camino, tal que partidos del Fierro á trece de Octubre dentro de veinte dias hobi-mos vista de tierra; y vieramosla á eatorce ó quince si la nao Capitana fuera tan buena velera como los otros navíos, porque muchas veces los otros navíos sacaban velas porque nos dejaban mucho atras. En todo este tiempo hobi-mos mucha bonanza, que en él ni en todo el camino no hobimos fortuna, salvo la víspera de S. Simon que nos vino una que por cuatro horas nos puso en harto estrecho. El primero Domingo despues de Todos Santos, que fue á tres dias de Noviembre, cerca del alba, dijo un piloto de la nao Capitana: albricias, que tenemos tierra. Fue el alegría tan grande en la gente que era maravilla oír las gritas y placeres que todos hacían, y con mucha razon, que la gente venían ya tan fatigados de mala vida y de pasar agua, que con muchos deseos sospiraban todos por tierra. Contaron aquel dia los pilotos del armada desde la isla de Fierro hasta la primera tierra que vimos unas ochocientas leguas, otros setecientas é ochenta, de manera que la diferencia no ere mucha, é mas trescientas que ponen de la isla de Fierro fasta Caliz, que eran por todas mil é ciento; así que no sienta quien no fuese satisfecho de ver agua. Vimos el Domingo de mañana sobredicho, por proa de los navíos, una isla, y luego á la man derecha pareció otra: la primera era la tierra alta de sierras por aquella parte que vimos, la otra era tierra llana, tambien muy llena de árboles muy espesos, y luego que fue mas de dia comenzó á parecer á una parte é á otra islas; de manera que aquel dia eran seis islas á diversas partes, y las mas harto grandes. Fuimos enderezados para ver aquella que primero

which one indicated the place of origin, e.g. 'la Gallega', one was usually the name of a saint, e.g. 'Santa María', and one a species of nickname, e.g. 'la Galante', referring very often to some quality in the vessel. The full name of the flagship of Columbus on this voyage was 'Santa María la Galante'.

* It is impossible that six islands 'most of them very large' should have been sighted. Probably peaks on one island were taken to be different islands, as they appeared on the horizon. An instance of such an error occurred during the first voyage (cp. *Journal*, 14 Oct. 1492, and Cronan, pp. 29-31), and the probability of a similar mistake being made on this occasion can be gauged from the outline sketches of the coasts of these islands as given in *The English Pilot*.

reached the coast, going more than a league in search of a harbour where we might anchor, but one was not to be found in all that distance. As much of the island as was in sight was all very mountainous, very beautiful, and very green down to the water, and this was a delight to see, since in our own country at that season there is scarcely any green.

When we found no harbour there, the admiral decided that we should go to the other island¹ which appeared on the right hand, and which was four or five leagues' distance from the first. Meanwhile one ship remained off the first island, seeking for a harbour all that day, in case it should be necessary to return to it, and she found there a good harbour, and houses and people were seen.² And later that night she rejoined the fleet which had put into harbour at the other island.

There the admiral, with the royal standard in his hands,³ landed, and many men with him, and there took possession for their highnesses in form of law. In this island, the trees were so dense that it was marvellous, and there were such varieties of trees, unknown to anyone, as was astonishing. Some of them were with fruit, some were in flower, so that everything was green. There were found a tree, the leaf of which had the finest scent of cloves that I have ever known, and it resembled laurel, except that it was not so large; I think, however, that it was a species of laurel.⁴ There were there fruits of different kinds growing wild, which some rather unwisely tasted, and touching them only with their tongues, from the taste their faces became swollen and such great heat and pain came over them that they seemed to be going mad;⁵ they cured this with cold things. In this island we found no people, and no sign of any; we believed it to be uninhabited. We were there some two hours, for when we arrived there it was nearly nightfall, and immediately on the next day, in the morning, we left for another island,⁶ which appeared beyond this and which was very large, being at a distance of about seven or eight leagues.

We reached it near the side of a great mountain which seemed almost to touch the sky. In the middle of this mountain, there was a peak higher than all the rest of the mountain,

¹ Maria Galante.

SEGUNDO VIAGE DE COLON

habiamos visto, é llegamos por la costa andando mas de una legua buscando puerto para surgir, el cual todo aquel espacio nunca se pudo hallar. Era en todo aquello que parecia desta isla todo montaña muy hermosa y muy verde, fasta el agua que era alegría en mirarla, porque en aquel tiempo no hay en nuestra tierra apenas cosa verde. Despues que allí no hallamos puerto acordó el Almirante que nos volviésemos á la otra isla que parescia á la mano derecha, que estaba desta otra cuatro ó cinco leguas. Quedó por entonces un navío en esta isla buscando puerto todo aquel dia para cuando fuese necesario venir á ella, en la cual halló buen puerto é vido casas é gentes, é luego se tornó aquella noche para donde estaba la flota que habia tomado puerto en la otra isla, donde descendió el Almirante é mucha gente con él con la bandera Real en las manos, adonde tomó posesion por sus Altezas en forma de derecho. En esta isla habia tanta espesura de arboledas que era maravilla, é tanta diferencia de árboles no conocidos á nadie que era para espantar, dellos con fruto, dellos con flor, así que todo era verde. Allí hallamos un arbol, cuya hoja tenia el mas fino olor de clavos que nunca ví, y era como laurel, salvo que no era así grande; yo así pienso que era laurel su especie. Allí habia frutas salvaginas de diferentes maneras, de las quales algunos no muy sabios probaban, y del gusto solamente tocándoles con las lenguas se les hinchaban las caras, y les venia tan grande ardor y dolor que parecian que rabiaban, los cuales se remediaban con cosas frias. En esta isla no hallamos gente nin señal della, creimos que era despoblada, en la cual estovimos bien dos horas, porque cuando allí llegamos era sobre tarde, é luego otro dia de mañana partimos para otra isla que parescia en bajo desta que era muy grande, fasta la cual desta que habria siete ú ocho leguas, llegamos á ella hácia la parte de una gran montaña que parecia que queria llegar al cielo, en medio

² Probably the modern Portsmouth, on St. Rupert's Bay, on the NW. coast of Dominica.

³ Cp. *supra*, p. I and note 7.

⁴ Perhaps the tambisque, described by Oviedo (viii. 32, 34).

⁵ Manchineal (*manzanillo*). The Caribs used the fruit of this tree to make the poison in which they dipped their arrows (Oviedo, ix. 12).

⁶ Guadaloupe.

from which many streams flowed in different directions, especially towards the part where we came. At a distance of three leagues, there appeared a waterfall as broad as an ox, which discharged itself from so great a height that it seemed to fall from the sky.¹ It was visible from so great a distance that many wagers were laid on the ships, since some said that it was white rocks and others that it was water. When we came nearer to it, the truth was apparent, and it was the loveliest thing in the world to see from what a height it fell and from how small a space so great a waterfall originated.

As soon as we came near, the admiral ordered a light caravel to proceed along the coast and seek for a harbour. The caravel went in advance and having reached the land, sighted some houses. The captain went to the shore in the boat and made his way to the houses, in which he found their inhabitants. Directly they saw our men, they took to flight. He entered the houses, where he found their possessions, for they had taken nothing away, and there he took two parrots, very large and very different from any that had been seen. He found much cotton, spun and ready for spinning, and articles of food, of all of which he brought away a little. Especially he brought away four or five bones of the arms and legs of men. As soon as we saw this, we suspected that those islands were the Carib islands which are inhabited by people who eat human flesh. For the admiral, in accordance with indications which the Indians of the islands which they had previously discovered had given to him on the former voyage concerning the situation of those islands, had directed his course to discover them, because they were the nearest to Spain and also because from there the route by which to come to the island of Española, where he had left people before, was direct. To those islands, by the goodness of God and by the good judgement of the admiral, we came as directly as if we had been following a known and accustomed route.

This island is very large and on this side it appeared that the coast was twenty-five leagues in length.² We coasted along it for more than two leagues, seeking a harbour. In the

¹ The fall on the river Carbet, 600 metres high. The river descends from La Soufrière (1,484 metres), and the fall is visible from a considerable distance.

SEGUNDO VIAGE DE COLÓN

de la cual montaña estaba un pico mas alto que toda la otra montaña, del cual se vertian á diversas partes muchas aguas, en especial hácia la parte donde ibamos: de tres leguas pareció un golpe de agua tan gordo como un bucy, que se despeñaba de tan alto como si cayera del cielo: parecia de tan lejos, que hobo en los navíos muchas apuestas, que unos decian que eran peñas blancas y otros que era agua. Desque llegamos mas á cerca vídose lo cierto, y era la mas hermosa cosa del mundo de ver cuan alto se despeñaba é de tan poco logar nacia tan gran golpe de agua. Luego que llegamos cerca mandó el Almirante á una carabela ligera que fuese costeanado á buscar puerto, la cual se adelantó y llegando á la tierra vido unas casas, é con la barca saltó el Capitan en tierra é llegó á las casas, en las cuales halló su gente, y luego que los vieron fueron huyendo, é entró en ellas, donde halló las cosas que ellos tienen, que no habian llevado náda, donde tomó dos papagayos muy grandes y muy diferenciados de cuantos se habian visto. Halló mucho algodón hilado é por hilar, é cosas de sus mantenimientos, é de todo trajo un poco, en especial trajo cuatro ó cinco huesos de brazos é piernas de hombres. Luego que aquello vimos sospechamos que aquellas islas eran las de Caribe, que son habitadas de gente que comen carne humana, porque el Almirante por las señas que le habian dado del sitio destas islas, el otro camino, los indios de las islas que antes habian descubierto, habia enderezado el camino por descubrirlas, porque estaban mas cerca de España, y tambien porque por allí se hacia el camino derecho para venir á la isla Española, donde antes habia dejado la gente, á los cuales, por la bondad de Dios y por el buen saber del Almirante, venimos tan derechos como si por camino sabido é seguido vinieramos. Esta isla es muy grande, y por el lado nos pareció que habia de luengo de costa veinte é cinco leguas: fuimos costeanado por ella buscando puerto mas de dos leguas; por la parte donde ibamos eran montañas muy altas, á la parte que de-

² Guadaloupe consists of two islands, Basse Terre and Grand Terre, divided by la Rivière Salée. Its total area is 716 square miles, of which Basse Terre has 618 square miles. Basse Terre is mountainous; Grande Terre flat. 'Twenty-five leagues' equals one hundred miles; there is thus some exaggeration, unless, as elsewhere sometimes seems to be the case, 'leagues' is used to mean miles (cp. *infra*, p. 124, note 2).

direction towards which we were going, there were very lofty mountains; in the direction which we were leaving, wide plains appeared. On the seashore there were some small villages, and as soon as they saw the sails, all the people ran away. Having gone two leagues, we found a harbour and that very late. That night the admiral decided that at daybreak some should go to speak with them and to learn what people they were, despite the suspicion felt and although those who had already been seen running away were naked people like the others whom the admiral had already seen on the previous voyage.¹

In the morning certain captains set out. Some returned at the hour of eating and brought a boy of about fourteen years, as was afterwards learned, and he said that he was one of those whom those people held captive. The others went in different directions. Some took a small boy, whom a man was leading by the hand and abandoned in order to escape. They sent him with some of them; others remained and of these some took certain women, natives of the island, and other women, who were some of the prisoners, who came of their own accord. From this party, one captain² separated with six men, not knowing that any information had been gained. He and those who went with him lost themselves, so that they never found the way back until at the end of four days they reached the coast of the sea and following it returned to the fleet.³ We had already given them up for lost and eaten by those people who are called Caribs, for there was not sufficient reason for thinking that they were lost in any other way; since there were with them pilots, sailors who by the star knew how to go and come from Spain, and we believed that in so small a space they could not lose themselves.

On this first day that we landed there, many men and women walked along the shore near the water wondering at the fleet and marvelling at so novel a spectacle. And when a boat came to land to speak with them, saying to them *tayno, tayno*, which means 'good', they waited as long as our men did not leave the water, remaining near it, in such a way that when they wished they could escape. The end

¹ The suspicion was presumably that the natives were Caribs.

Jamos parecían grandes llanos, á la orilla de la mar habia algunos poblados pequeños, é luego que veian las velas huian todos. Andadas dos leguas hallamos puerto y bien tarde. Esa noche acordó el Almirante que á la madrugada saliesen algunos para tomar lengua é saber que gente era, no embargante la sospecha é los que ya habian visto ir huyendo, que era gente desnuda como la otra que ya el Almirante habia visto el otro viage. Salieron esa madrugada ciertos Capitanes; los unos vinieron á hora de comer é trageron un mozo de fasta catorce años, á lo que despues se sopo, é él dijo que era de los que esta gente tenian cativos. Los otros se dividieron, los unos tomaron un mochacho pequeño, al cual llevaba un hombre por la mano, é por huir lo desamparó. Este enviaron luego con algunos dellos, otros quedaron, é destos unos tomaron ciertas mugeres naturales de la isla, é otras que se vinieron de grado, que eran de las cativas. Desta compañía se apartó un Capitan no sabiendo que se habia habido lengua con seis hombres, el cual se perdió con los que con él iban, que jamas sopieron tornar, fasta que á cabo de cuatro dias toparon con la costa de la mar, é siguiendo por ella tornaron á topar con la flota. Ya los teniamos por perdidos é comidos de aquellas gentes que se dicen los Caribes, porque no bastaba razon para creer que eran perdidos de otra manera, porque iban entre ellos pilotos, marineros que por la estrella saben ir é venir hasta España, creiamos que en tan pequeño espacio no se podian perder. Este dia primero que allí decendimos andaban por la playa junto con el agua muchos hombres é mugeres mirando la flota, é maravillándose de cosa tan nueva, é llegándose alguna barca á tierra á hablar con ellos, diciéndolos *tayno tayno*, que quiere decir *bueno*, esperaban en tanto que no salian del agua, junto con él moran, de manera que cuando ellos querian se podian salvar: en conclusion, que de los hombres ninguno se pudo tomar por fuerza ni por grado, salva dos que se aseguraron é despues los trajeron por fuerza

² Diego Marquez, of Seville (Las Casas, i. 84). He was sent as veedor (Las Casas, i. 82). At a later date, he was treasurer in Castilla del Oro, under Pedrarias (*loc. cit.*).

³ According to Cuneo (*Rac. Col. loc. cit.*), the lost party were guided to the coast by a native woman and lit a fire to indicate their whereabouts to the fleet.

was that none of the men could be taken by force or persuasion, except two who were over-confident and who were afterwards taken there by force. More than twenty women of the captives were taken and other natives of the island came of their own accord, besides those who were captured and taken by force. Some boys, prisoners, came to our men, flying from the natives of the island who held them captive.

We were in that harbour eight days, on account of the loss of the above-mentioned captain, and there we went on land many times, going about the dwellings and villages which were on the coast. There we found a great quantity of men's bones and skulls hung up about the houses like vessels to hold things. Not many men appeared here; the reason was, as the women told us, that ten canoes had gone with people to raid other islands. This people seemed to us to be more civilized than those who were in the other islands which we have visited, although they all have dwellings of straw, but these have them much better made and better provided with supplies, and in them were more signs of industry, both of men and women. They had much cotton, woven and ready to weave, and many cotton sheets, so well made as to lose nothing by comparison with those of our own country.

We asked the women, who were captive on this island, what these people were; they replied that they were Caribs. After they understood that we abhorred that race for their evil custom of eating human flesh, they rejoiced greatly, and if after that any woman or man of the Caribs were brought in, they said secretly that they were Caribs, for, as a conquered race, they went in terror of them, even here where all were in our power. In this way we knew which of the women were Caribs and which not, for the Caribs wear two bandages, made of cotton, on each leg, one near the knee and the other near the ankles. The result is to make the calves large and the places mentioned very small, and to me it appears that they regard this as an attraction. So, by this difference, we knew the one race from the other.

The customs of this race of Caribs are bestial. There are three islands, this which is called Turuqueira, the other, which we first sighted, called Ceyre, and the third called

allí. Se tomaron mas de veinte mugeres de las cativas, y de su grado se venian otros naturales de la isla, que fueron salteadas é tomadas por fuerza. Ciertos mochachos cabtivos se vinieron á nosotros huyendo de los naturales de la isla que los tenian cabtivos. En este puerto estovimos ocho dias á causa de la pérdida del sobredicho Capitan, donde muchas veces salimos á tierra andando por sus moradas é pueblos, que estaban á la costa, donde hallamos infinitos huesos de hombres, é los cascos de las cabezas colgados por las casas á manera de vasijas para tener cosas. Aquí no parecieron muchos hombres; la causa era, segun nos dijeron las mugeres, que eran idas diez canoas con gentes á saltar á otras islas. Esta gente nos pareció mas pulítica que la que habita en estas otras islas que habemos visto, aunque todos tienen las moradas de paja; pero estos las tienen de mucho mejor hechura, é mas proveidas de mantenimientos, é parece en ellas mas industria ansi veril como femenil. Tenian mucho algodón hilado y por hilar, y muchas mantas de algodón tan bien tejidas que no deben nada á las de nuestra patria. Preguntamos á las mugeres, que eran cativas en esta isla, que qué gente era esta; respondieron que eran Caribes. Despues que entendieron que nosotros aborreciamos tal gente por su mal uso de comer carne de hombres, holgaban mucho, y sí de nuevo traian alguna muger ó hombre de los Caribes, secretamente decian que eran Caribes, que allí donde estaban todos en nuestro poder mostraban temor dellos como gente sojuzgada, y de allí conocimos cuáles eran Caribes de las mugeres é cuáles nó, porque las Caribes traian en las piernas en cada una dos argollas tejidas de algodón, la una junto con la rodilla, la otra junto con los tobillos; de manera que les hacen las pantorrillas grandes, é de los sobredichos logares muy ceñidas, que esto me parece que tienen ellos por cosa gentil, ansi que por esta diferencia conocemos los unos de los otros. La costumbre desta gente de Caribes es bestial: son tres islas, esta se llama Turuqueira, la otra que primero vimos se llama Ceyre, la tercera se llama Ayay; estos todos son conformidad como si fuesen de un linage, los cuales no se hacen mal: unos é otros hacen guerra á todas las otras islas comarcanas, los cuales van por mar ciento é cincuenta leguas á saltar con muchas canoas que tienen, que son unas fustas

• Ayay.¹ They are all agreed, as if they were of one family, doing no ill to each other. One and all they make war on all the other neighbouring islands, and they go by sea in the many canoes which they have and which are small *fustas*, made of a single piece of wood, a hundred and fifty leagues to make raids. Their arms are arrows in place of iron weapons. As they do not possess any iron, some of them fix on points made of tortoise-shell, others from another island fix on fish bones which are indented, being so naturally, like very strong saws. For an unarmed people, as they all are, such weapons can kill and do great injury, but for people of our nation they are not arms to be greatly feared.

These people raid the other islands and carry off the women whom they can take, especially the young and handsome. They keep them in service and have them as concubines, and they carry off so many that in fifty houses no males were found, and of the captives more than twenty were girls. These women also say that they are treated with a cruelty which appears to be incredible, for they eat the male children whom they have from them and only rear those whom they have from their own women. As for the men whom they are able to take, they bring such as are alive to their houses to cut up for meat, and those who are dead, they eat at once. They say that the flesh of a man is so good that there is nothing like it in the world, and it certainly seems to be so for, from the bones which we found in their houses, they had gnawed everything that could be gnawed, so that nothing was left on them except what was too tough to be eaten. In one house there a neck of a man was found cooking in a pot. They castrate the boys whom they capture and employ them as servants until they are fully grown, and then when they wish to make a feast, they kill and eat them, for they say that the flesh of boys and of women is not good to eat. Of these boys, three came fleeing to us, and all three had been castrated.

And at the end of four days, the captain who had been lost returned. We were already in despair of his coming, for other hands² had already twice gone to search for him and that

¹ These islands have been identified as Guadeloupe, Maria Galante, and Santa Cruz. But Turuqueira and Ayay have also been taken to be the two islands

pequeñas de un solo madero. Sus armas son flechas en lugar de hierros; porque no poseen ningún hierro, ponen unas puntas flechas de huesos de tortugas los unos, otros de otro isla ponen unas espigas de un pez flechas dentadas, que así lo son naturalmente, á manera de sierras bien recias, que para gente desarmada, como son todos, es cosa que les puede matar é hacer harto daño; pero para gente de nuestra nación no son armas para mucho temer. Esta gente saltea en las otras islas, que traen las mugeres que pueden haber, en especial mozas y hermosas, las cuales tienen para su servicio, é para tener por mancebas, é traen tantas que en cincuenta casas ellos no parecieren, y de las cativas se vinieron mas de veinte mozas. Dicen también estas mugeres que estos usan de una crueldad que parece cosa increíble; que los hijos que en ellas han se los comen, que solamente crían los que han en sus mugeres naturales. Los hombres que pueden haber, los que son vivos llevánselos á sus casas para hacer carnicería dellos, y los que han muertos luego se los comen. Dicen que la carne del hombre es tan buena que no hay tal cosa en el mundo; y bien parece porque los huesos que en estas casas hallamos todo lo que se puede roer todo lo tenían roído, que no había en ellos sino lo que por su mucha dureza no se podía comer. Allí se halló en una casa cociendo en una olla un pezcuello de un hombre. Los moachos que cativan cortanlos el miembro, é sirvense de ellos fasta que son hombres, y despues quando quieren facer fiesta mátanlos é cómenselos, porque dicen que la carne de los moachos é de las mugeres no es buena para comer. Destos moachos se vinieron para nosotros huyendo tres todos tres cortados sus miembros. E á cabo de quatro dias vino el Capitan que se había perdido, de cuya venida estábamos ya bien desesperados, porque ya los habían ido á buscar otras cuadrillas por dos veces, é aquel dia vino la una

which together form Guadeloupe, while Ceyre has been identified with Dominica. The latter identification would seem to be unsatisfactory, in view of the statement that Dominica was uninhabited. Ceyre is no doubt the same island as the 'Quaris', mentioned in the letter on the first voyage (cp. *supra*, p. 14).

² One search party was led by Alonso de Ojeda (cp. *infra*, p. 76 note 3) who took forty men with him (Las Casas, i. 84). According to Cunco (*Rac. Col. loc. cit.*), two hundred men in all were sent to search and it was feared that they were also lost.

very day one band had returned without learning anything certainly of him. We rejoiced at his coming as if he had been newly found. This captain, besides those who went with him, brought in ten head, boys and women. Neither they nor the others who went to seek for them ever found men, for they had fled or perhaps it was because in that district there were few men, since, as was learned from the women, ten canoes with people had gone to raid the other islands. He and those who were with him came from the mountain so worn out that it was pitiful to see them. When they were asked how they had got lost, they said that the trees were so thick that they could not see the sky, and that some of them, who were sailors, had climbed the trees to look for the star and had never been able to see it, and that if they had not struck the sea, it would have been impossible for them to regain the fleet.

We left this island eight days after we had arrived there.¹ Afterwards, next day at noon, we saw another island, not very large, which was twelve leagues from the first.² As on the day immediately after we left we were becalmed for the greater part of the day, we were close to the coast of this island, and the Indian women whom we took with us said that it was not inhabited, for the Caribs had depopulated it, and for this reason we did not stay at it. After that, on this evening, we saw another;³ this night, near this island, we found many shoals, for fear of which we anchored, as we did not dare to proceed until daylight. Then, in the morning, another very large island appeared.⁴ We did not go to any of these in order that we might bring consolation to those who had been left in Española, and it did not please God, as will appear later.

On the next day, at the hour of eating, we reached another island⁵ and it appeared to us to be very good, for it seemed to be very populous, judging from the many tracts of cultivated land which were on it. We went there and put into a harbour on the coast. The admiral immediately ordered a boat, well manned, to put to shore in order, if possible, to hold speech to find what people they were, and also because

¹ Sunday, 10 Nov. (Las Casas, i. 85).

cuadrilla sin saber dellos ciertamente. Holgamos con su venida como si nuevamente se hobieran hallado: trajo este Capitan con los que fueron con él diez cabezas entre muchachos y mugeres. Estos ni los otros que los fueron á buscar, nunca hallaron hombres porque se habien huido, ó por ventura que en aquella comarca habia pocos hombres, porque segun se supo de las mugeres eran idas diez canoas con gentes á saltar á otras islas. Vino él é los que fueron con él tan destrozados del monte, que era lástima de los ver: decian, preguntándoles como se habian perdido, dijeron que era la espesura de los árboles tanta que el cielo no podian ver, é que algunos de ellos, que eran marineros, habian subido por los árboles para mirar el estrella, é que nunca la podieron ver, é que si no toparan con el mar fuera imposible tornar á la flota. Partimos desta isla ocho dias despues que allí llegamos. Luego otro dia á medio dia vimos otra isla, no muy grande, que estaria desta otra doce leguas; porque el primero dia que partimos lo mas del dia nos fizo calma, fuimos junto con la costa desta isla, é dijeron las Indias que llevabamos que no era habitada, que los Caribes la habian despoblado, é por esto no paramos en ella. Luego esa tarde vimos otra: á esa noche, cerca desta isla, fallamos unos bajos, por cuyo temor sorgimos, que no osamos andar fasta que fuese de dia. luego á la mañana pareció otra isla harto grande: á ninguna destas no llegamos por consolar los que habian dejado en la Española, é no plogó á Dios segun que abajo parecerá. Otro dia á hora de comer llegamos á una isla é pareciónos mucho bien, porque parecia muy poblada, segun las muchas labranzas que en ella habia. Fuimos allá é tomamos puerto en la costa: luego mandó el Almirante ir á tierra una barca guarnecida de gente para si pudiese tomar lengua para saber que gente era, é tambien porque habiamos menester informarnos del camino, caso quel Almirante, aunque nunca habia fecho aquel camino, iba muy

² Montserrat (Las Casas, *ibid.*). It was so named after the mountain near Barcelona. Its area is 32 sq. miles.

³ Santa Maria la Redonda (Las Casas, *ibid.*). So named from its shape.

⁴ Santa Maria de la Antigua (Las Casas, *ibid.*). According to Ferdinand Columbus (c. 47), the natives called this island Jamaica. Its area is 108 sq. miles.

⁵ San Martin (Las Casas, *loc. cit.*).

we had need to inform ourselves of the route, although the admiral, despite the fact that he had never made that voyage, followed a very direct course, as eventually appeared. But because doubtful matters ought always to be examined with the greatest possible care, he wished to have speech there, for which reason some of the men who went in the boat landed and proceeded by land to a village, from which the people had already gone into hiding. They took there five or six women and some boys, of whom most were of the number of the captives, as in the other island, for the people here also were of the Caribs, as we already knew from the account of the women whom we brought with us.

This boat was already about to return to the ships with the capture which had been made below this place; along the coast came a canoe in which were four men and two women and a boy, and when they saw the fleet, they were so stupefied with amazement that for a full hour they remained there without moving from a place about two lombard shot from the ships. In this time, they were seen by those who were in the boat and even by the whole fleet. Immediately those in the boat went towards them, keeping so close to shore that the others, as a result of the stupefaction which overcame them, wondering and thinking what thing this might be, never noticed them until they were very close to them, so that they could not well escape although they made a great effort to do so, but our men pressed on them so rapidly that they were unable to get away. The Caribs when they saw that flight was useless, with great daring, took up their bows, the women as well as the men. And I say 'with great daring', because they were not more than four men and two women, and our men were more than twenty-five. Of these, they wounded two; one they hit twice with arrows in the breast, and the other once in the side, and if it had not been that our men carried shields of leather and wood, and that they came near them with the boat and upset the canoe, they would have wounded most of them with their arrows. And when their canoe was upset, they remained in the water swimming and occasionally wading, as there were some shallows there, and it was a great trouble to take them, for they still shot as

bien encaminado segun en cabo pareció. Pero porque las cosas dubdosas se deben siempre buscar con la mayor certinidad que haberse pueda, quiso haber allí lengua, de la cual gente que iba en la barca ciertas personas saltaron en tierra, é llegaron en tierra á un poblado de donde la gente ya se habia escondido. Tomaron allí cinco ó seis mugeres y ciertos mochachos, de las cuales las mas eran tambien de las cativas como en la otra isla, porque tambien estos eran de los Caribes, segun ya sabiamos por la relacion de las mugeres que traíamos. Ya que esta barca se queria tornar á los navíos con su presa que habia fecho por parte debajo; por la costa venia una canoa en que venian cuatro hombres é dos mugeres é un mochacho, é desque vieron la flota maravillados se embebecieron tanto que por una grande hora estovieron que no se movieron de un lugar casi dos tiros de lombarda de los navíos. En esto fueron vistos de los que estaban en la barca é aun de toda la flota. Luego los de la barca fueron para ellos tan junto con la tierra, que con el embebecimiento que tenian, maravillándose é pensando que cosa seria, nunca los vieron hasta que estovieron muy cerca dellos, que no les pudieron mucho huir aunque harto trabajaron por ello; pero los nuestros aguijaron con tanta priesa que no se les pudieron ir. Los Caribes desque vieron que el hoir no les aprovechaba, con mucha osadia pusieron mano á los arcos, tambien las mugeres como los hombres; é digo con mucha osadia porque ellos no eran mas de cuatro hombres y dos mugeres, é los nuestros mas de veinte é cinco, de los cuales firieron dos, al uno dieron dos frechadas en los pechos é al otro una por el costado, é sino fuera porque llevaban adargas é tablachutas, é porque los invistieron presto con la barca é les trastornaron su canoa, asactearan con sus frechas los mas dellos. E despues de trastornada su canoa quedaron en el agua nadando, é á las veces haciendo pie, que allí habia unos bajos, é tovieron harto que hacer en tomarlos, que todavía cuanto podian tiraban, é con todo eso el uno no lo pudieron tomar sino mal herido de una lanzada que murió, el cual trajeron ansi herido fasta los navíos. La diferencia destos á los otros indios en el hábito, es que los de Caribe tienen el cabello muy largo, los otros son tresquilados é fechas cien mil diferencias en las cabezas de

much as they could, and with all this, there was one whom they could not take until he was mortally wounded and whom they brought, so wounded, to the ships.

The difference between these people and the other Indians in appearance is that the Caribs wear their hair very long; the others have it cut irregularly and their heads are decorated with a hundred thousand different devices, such as crosses and other markings of different kinds, which they make with sharpened reeds, each according to his fancy. All, both the Caribs and the others, are a beardless race, so they regard a man who has a beard as a marvel. The Caribs, whom they took there, had their eyes and eyebrows stained, which, I think, they do for show, and from that they appear more terrifying. One of them said that in one of their islands, called Cayre, which is the first that we saw and to which we did not go, there is much gold;¹ that they go there with nails and tools to build their canoes, and that they bring away as much gold as they please.

After this, on that day, we left that island, where we had not stayed more than six or seven hours, and we went towards some other land² which came in sight and which was on the route that we had to follow; at night we arrived near it. Next day in the morning we went along its coast; there was very much land, although it was not very continuous, as there were more than forty islands and so many islets.³ The land was very high and most of it barren, which was not the case with any that we had seen before or which we have since seen. The land seemed to be of a character to have metals in it. We did not go to this land, except that a lateen-rigged caravel went up to one of the islets, on which they found some fishermen's huts. The Indian women whom we had with us said that they were not inhabited.

We went along this coast for the greater part of this day, until on the following day in the evening we came in sight of another island, called Burenquen,⁴ along the coast of which we ran for a whole day: it was judged that on that side it extended for thirty leagues. This island is very lovely and appears to be very fertile; thither come the Caribs to conquer

¹ If Cayre be identified with Dominica, the statement that there is much gold

crucés, é de otras pinturas en diversas maneras, cada uno como se le antoja, lo cual se hacen con cañas agudas. Todos así los de Caribe como los otros es gente sin barbas, que por maravilla hallarás hombre que las tenga. Estos Caribes que allí tomaron venían tiznados los ojos é las cejas, lo cual me parece que hacen por gala, é con aquello parecían mas espantables; el uno destos dice que en una isla dellos, llamada Cayre, que es la primera que vimos, á la cual no llegamos, hay mucho oro; que vayan allá con clavos é contezuelas para hacer sus canoas, é que traerán cuanto oro quisieren. Luego aquel día partimos de esta isla, que no estábamos allí mas de seis ó siete horas, fuimos para otra tierra que pareció á ojo que estaba en el camino que habíamos de hacer: llegamos noche cerca della. Otro día de mañana fuimos por la costa della: era muy gran tierra, aunque no era muy continua, que eran mas de cuarenta y tantos islones, tierra muy alta, é la mas della pelada, la cual no era ninguna ni es de las que antes ni después habemos visto. Parecía tierra dispuesta para haber en ella metales: á esta no llegamos para saltar en tierra, salvo una carabela latina llegó á un islon de estos, en el cual hallaron ciertas casas de pescadores. Las Indias que traíamos dijeron que no eran pobladas. Andovimos por esta costa lo mas deste día, hasta otro día en la tarde que llegamos á vista de otra isla llamada Burenquen, cuya costa corrimos todo un día: juzgábase que tenía por aquella banda treinta leguas. Esta isla es muy hermosa y muy fértil á parecer: á esta vienen los de Caribe á conquistar, de la cual llevaban

there is inaccurate; nor does gold seem ever to have been found in Maria Galante. From the context here, it would seem to be possible either that the natives were misunderstood or that the text is corrupt, and that in place of 'gold', 'wood' should be read. Both the islands in question are well wooded.

² Santa Cruz, reached on Thursday, 14 Nov. (Las Casas, *loc. cit.*).

³ Columbus called these islands Santa Ursula y las Once Mil Virgines (Las Casas, *loc. cit.*). It does not appear that any individual island was called Santa Ursula, which name does not appear in any early maps.

⁴ Puerto Rico. The native name of the island is variously given as Boriquen (Las Casas), Boluchen (Cuneco), Burenquen or Burenwuen (Chanca). Boriquen would seem to be the best rendering. Columbus named the island San Juan Baptista (Las Casas, *loc. cit.*), and in this Ulloa (*La Genèse de la Découverte*, pp. 28-9) finds a further attempt on the part of the admiral to perpetuate his own name. It became known as San Juan del Puerto Rico (Las Casas, *ibid.*), and eventually as Puerto Rico or Porto Rico. The length of Puerto Rico is approximately one hundred miles.

it and thence they carry away many people. These people have no *fustas* and do not know how to go by sea, but, according to that which those Caribs whom we have taken say, they use bows as they do, and if by chance they are able to take those who come to raid them, they also eat them as do the Caribs. We were two days in a harbour of this island, and there many men went ashore, but we were never able to have speech with the people, who all fled as being terrified by the Caribs.

All these above-mentioned islands were discovered on this voyage, for up to then the admiral had seen none of them on the previous voyage. They are all very lovely and have a very fertile soil, but this last seemed to be the best of all. Here almost ended the islands which, on the side lying towards Spain, the admiral had not seen. But we hold it to be certain that there is land more than forty leagues nearer Spain than these first islands, because two days before we sighted land, we saw some birds called *rabihorcados*,¹ which are marine birds of prey and which do not sit or sleep on the water, and about nightfall they were circling upwards in the air and then making their way in search of land on which to sleep. As it was evening, they could not have been going to settle more than twelve or fifteen leagues away and that on our right hand as we were coming, in the direction of Spain. From this all judged that there was more land there, but we did not look for it as it would have taken us round out of our intended course. I hope that in a few voyages it will be found.²

From the above-mentioned island we set out one day at dawn and on that day, before nightfall, we came in sight of land, which was also unknown to any of those who had gone on the previous voyage, but which, from the information received from the Indian women whom we had with us, we guessed must be Española, where we are at present. Between it and the other island of Burenwuen, another island³ appeared at a distance, although it was not large. When we reached Española, at first on that side the land was low and very flat, and on seeing this, all were doubtful as to what land it was, for that part neither the admiral nor those who were with him had seen.⁴

¹ *Pelicanus aquilis*, the frigate-bird.

SEGUNDO VIAGE DE COLON

mucha gente ; estos no tienen fustas ningunas nin saben andar por mar ; pero, segun dicen estos Caribes que tomamos, usan arcos como ellos, é si por caso euando los vienen á saltar los pueden prender tambien, se los comen como los de Caribe á ellos. En un puerto desta isla estovimos dos dias, donde saltó mucha gente en tierra ; pero jamas podimos haber lengua, que todos se fuyeron como gente temORIZADAS de los Caribes. Todas estas islas dichas fueron descubiertas deste camino, que fasta aquí ninguna dellas habia visto el Almirante el otro viage, todas son muy hermosas é de muy buena tierra ; pero esta pareció mejor á todas : aquí casi se acabaron las islas que fácia la parte de España habia dejado de ver el Almirante, aunque tenemos por cosa cierta que hay tierra mas de cuarenta leguas antes de estas primeras hasta España, porque dos dias antes que viesemos tierra vimos unas aves que llaman rabihorcados, que son aves de rapiña marinas é no sientan ni duermen sobre el agua, sobre tarde rodeando sobir en alto, é despues tiran su vía á buscar tierra para dormir, las cuales no podrian ir á caer segun era tarde de doce ó quince leguas arriba, y esto era á la man derecha donde veniamos hasta la parte de España ; de donde todos juzgaron allí quedar tierra, lo cual no se buscó porque se nos hacia rodeo para la via que traíamos. Espero que á pocos viages se hallará. Desta isla sobredicha partimos una madrugada, é aquel día, antes que fuese noche, hobimos vista de tierra, la cual tampoco era conocida de ninguno de los que habian venido el otro viage ; pero por las nuevas de las indias que traíamos sospechamos que era la Española, en la cual agora estamos. Entre esta isla é la otra de Buriquen parecia de lejos otra, aunque no era grande. Desque llegamos á esta Española, por el comienzo de ella era tierra baja y muy llana, del conocimiento de la cual aun estaban todos dubdosos si fuese la que es, porque aquella parte nin el Almirante ni los otros que con él vinieron habian visto, é aquesta isla como es grande es nombrada por provincias, é á esta parte que primero llegamos llaman Hayti, y

² This land was the remaining Leeward Islands.

³ Mona.

⁴ 'Apparently between Point Macao and Point Engaño, which is flat. The higher land of the north coast commences at Point Macao' (Major, *Select Letters*, p. 41, note 3).

As this island is large, it has provinces with different names, and the part to which we first came they call Haiti, and the province next after it they call Xamana, and the next in which we now are, Bohio.¹ There are, moreover, many sub-divisions of these provinces,² for it is a great land, since, as those who have seen the length of the coast affirm, it extends for two hundred leagues. It appears to me that it is not less than a hundred and fifty leagues in length; as to its breadth, that is not yet known.³ A caravel went forty days ago to circumnavigate it, and has not yet returned.

The land is very remarkable, and in it there are innumerable great rivers and great mountain ranges and large open valleys and lofty mountains. I imagine that the foliage is green all the year round. I do not believe that there is any winter in this island or in the others, for at Christmas many birds' nests were found, some with young birds in them and some with eggs. Neither in it nor in the other islands has any four-footed animal been seen, except some dogs of various colours, as in our own native land, in appearance like some large *gosques*.⁴ There are no savage animals. There is, further, an animal, the colour of a rabbit and with similar fur; it is the size of a young rabbit, has a long tail, and hind and fore feet like those of a rat.⁵ These animals climb trees, and many who have eaten them say that the flesh is very good to eat.

There are many small snakes. There are not many lizards, and so the Indians make as great a dainty of them as we make of pheasants at home; they are the same size as those at home, but are of a different shape.⁶ In a small islet, however, which lies near a harbour that they call Monte Christi,⁷ where we stayed many days, they saw on many occasions a very large lizard, which they say was as great round as a calf, and from tip to tail as long as a lance.⁸ They went out many

¹ Haiti, 'the land of hills', and Bohio, 'the land of villages', were native names for the whole island. Xamana was part of the Vega Real, lying on the north coast. The district first reached on this voyage was Higüey, the most easterly province of the island, and the 'Bohio' of Chanea was Marien.

² Las Casas (*Apologética Historia*, c. 2-7) enumerates and describes some twenty provinces in the island, but in the *Destrucción de las Indias*, he distinguishes five kingdoms—Marien, Magua, Maguana, Xaragua, and Higüey, and these may be regarded as the main divisions of the island (cp. Oviedo, iii. 4).

³ The extreme breadth of Española is 150 miles.

luego á la otra provincia junta con esta llaman Xamaná, é á la otra Bohio, en la cual agora estamos; ansi hay en ellas muchas provincias porque es gran cosa, porque segun afirman los que la han visto por la costa de largo, dicen que habrá doscientas leguas: á mi me parece que á lo menos habrá ciento é cinquenta; del ancho della hasta agora no se sabe. Allá es ido cuarenta dias ha á rodearla una carebela, la cual no es venida hasta hoy. Es tierra muy singular, donde hay infinitos rios grandes é sierras grandes é valles grandes rasos, grandes montañas: sospecho que nunca se secan las yerbas en todo el año. Non creo que hay invierno ninguno en esta nin en las otras, porque por Navidad se fallan muchos nidos de aves, dellas con pájaros, é dellas con huevos. En ella ni en las otras nunca se ha visto animal de cuatro pies, salvo algunos perros de todas colores como en nuestra patria, la hechura como unos gosques grandes; de animales salvages no hay. Otrosí, hay un animal de color de conejo é de su pelo, el grandor de un conejo nuevo, el rabo largo, los pies é manos como de raton, suben por los árboles, muchos los han comido, dicen que es muy bueno de comer: hay culebras muchas no grandes; lagartos aunque no muchos, porque los indios hacen tanta fiesta dellos como haríamos allá con faisanes, son del tamaño de los de allá, salvo que en la hechura son diferentes, aunque en una isleta pequeña, que está junto con un puerto que llaman Monte Christi, donde estovimos muchos dias, vieron muchos dias un lagarto muy grande que decian que seria de gordura de un becerro, é atan complido como una lanza, é muchas veces salieron por lo matar, é con la mucha espesura

⁴ These dogs were of various colours and both rough and smooth haired; their hair was rather coarser than that of similar dogs in Spain. They had ears like wolves, and never barked, although, if maltreated, they might yelp or growl. They were domesticated by the Indians, but were extinct in Española by the end of the first quarter of the sixteenth century. Owing to the shortage of provisions, after Columbus had reached Española on this voyage, the Spaniards ate these dogs; to those who became accustomed to it, the taste was not unpleasant, being rather like that of a kid (cp. Oviedo, xii. 5).

⁵ Aguti (cp. Oviedo, xii. 1).

⁶ For the snakes and lizards of Española, see Oviedo, xii. 7, 8.

⁷ Cabras, of Goat Island, in the bay of Monte Christi, on the north coast of the island.

⁸ An alligator (cp. Oviedo, xii. 7).

times to kill it, but owing to the thick undergrowth, it escaped from them into the sea, so that they were not able to come face to face with it. In this island and in the others, there are an infinite number of birds like those of our own country and many others which have never been seen there.¹ Of domestic fowl, none have been seen here, except that in Zuruquia² there were in the houses some ducks, most of them white as snow and some black, very pretty, with flat crests, and larger than those at home, although smaller than geese.

We ran along the coast of this island about a hundred leagues, for the place where the admiral had left the men, which was at or near the middle of the island, should have been within this distance. Going past the province called Xamana, we cast ashore one of the Indians whom they had carried away on the previous voyage, clothed, and with some trifles which the admiral commanded to be given to him. On that day there died of our men a Biscayan sailor who had been wounded by the Caribs, who, as I have already said, were taken owing to their lack of caution and because we kept near the shore. An opportunity was taken for a boat to go to shore to bury him, and to convoy the boat two caravels went near the land. Many Indians came out to the boat when it reached the shore, and some of them wore gold round their necks and in their ears. They wished to come with the Christians to the ships, and they would not take them, because they had not permission from the admiral. When they saw that our men would not take them, two of them got into a small canoe and went to one of the caravels which had put into shore. They were received on board with kindness and were brought to the admiral's ship. And by an interpreter, they said that a certain king sent them to know what people we were and to ask us to consent to land, for they had much gold and would give of it and of that which they had to eat. The admiral commanded shirts to be given to each of them and caps and other trifles, and told them that as he was on his way to where Guacamari was, he could not wait, but that there would be another time when he would be able to see their king, and with that they went away.

se les metía en la mar, de manera que no se pudo haber dél derecho. Hay en esta isla y en las otras infinitas aves de las de nuestra patria, é otras muchas que allá nunca se vieron: de las aves domésticas nunca se ha visto acá ninguna, salvo en la Zuruquia habia en las casas unas ánades, las mas dellas blancas como la nieve é algunas dellas negras, muy lindas, con crestas rasas, mayores que las de allá, menores que ánsares. Por la costa desta isla corrimos al pie de cien leguas porque hasta donde el Almirante habia dejado la gente, habria en este compás, que será en comedio ó en medio de la isla. Andando por la provincia della llamada Xamana, en derecho echamos en tierra uno de los indios quel otro viage habian llevado vestido, é con algunas cosillas quel Almirante le habia mandado dar. Aquel dia se nos murió un marinero vizcaino que habia seido herido de los Caribes, que ya dije que se tomaron, por su mala guarda, é porque ibamos por costa de tierra, dióse lugar que saliese una barca á enterrarlo, é fueron en reguarda de la barca dos carabelas cerca con tierra. Salieron á la barca en llegando en tierra muchos indios, de los cuales algunos traian oro al cuello, é á las orejas; querian venir con los cristianos á los navíos, é no los quisieron traer, porque no llevaban licencia del Almirante; los cuales desque vieron que no los querian traer se metieron dos dellos en una canoa pequeña, é se vinieron á una carabela de las que se habian acercado á tierra, en la cual los recibieron con su amor, é trajéronlos á la nao del Almirante, é dijeron, mediante un intérprete, que un Rey fulano los enviaba á saber que gente eramos, é á rogar que quisiesemos llegar á tierra, porque tenian mucho oro é le darian dello, é de lo que tenian de comer: el Almirante les mandó dar sendas camisas é bone-tes é otras cosillas, é les dijo que porque iba á donde estaba Guacamará non se podria detener, que otro tiempo habria que le pudiese ver, é con esto se fueron. No cesamos de andar nuestro camino fasta llegar á un puerto llamado Monte Cristi, donde estuvimos dos dias para ver la disposicion de la

¹ For the birds of Española, see Oviedo, Bk. xiv (cp. Las Casas, *Apologética Historia*, c. 9).

² This place has not been identified, but should possibly be Xaragua.

We did not cease to follow our course until we arrived at a harbour called Monte Christi, where we remained two days to examine the character of the land, because the place where he had left the men did not seem to the admiral to be suitable for making a settlement. We went on shore to make inspection. Near there was a large river¹ with very good water, but all the land is waterlogged and very unsuitable for habitation. As we went about, looking at the river and the land, some of our men found in one spot near the river two dead men, one with a rope round his neck and the other with his feet bound. This was on the first day. On the next day following, they found two other dead men, farther on than the others, and of these one was in such state that it was possible to know that he had been heavily bearded. Some of our men suspected more evil than good, and with reason, since the Indians are all beardless, as has been said. This harbour is twelve leagues' distance from the place where the Christians were.

After two days, we set sail for the place where the admiral had left the aforesaid people, in company with a king of these Indians, who was called Guacamari² and whom I take to be one of the chief men of this island. This day we arrived opposite that place, but it was already evening, and as there are there some shoals, on which had previously been lost the ship in which the admiral had sailed, we did not dare to enter the harbour near the shore until next day in the morning soundings could be taken and they might enter in safety; we remained for that night less than a league from shore.

On this evening, coming in that direction from a distance, a canoe containing five or six Indians came our way and they came rapidly towards us. The admiral, believing it safer for us to keep our sails set, would not allow us to wait for them, and they, persevering, arrived within a lombard shot of us and stopped to watch, and then, when they saw that we did not wait for them, they put back and returned. After we had anchored in that place on the said evening, the admiral commanded two lombards to be fired to see if the Christians, who had remained with the said Guacamari, would answer, for they also had lombards. And they never replied and no fires

tierra, porque no habia parecido bien al Almirante el lugar donde habia dejado la gente para hacer asiento. Decendimos en tierra para ver la dispusicion: habia cerca de allí un gran rio de muy buena agua; pero es toda tierra anegada é muy indispuesta para habitar. Andando veyendo el rio ó tierra hallaron algunos de los nuestros en una parte dos hombres muertos junto con el rio, el uno con un lazo al pescuezo y el otro con otro al pie, esto fue el primero dia. Otro dia siguiente hallaron otros dos muertos mas adelante de aquellos, el uno destos estaba en disposicion que se le pudo conocer tener muchas barbas. Algunos de los nuestros sospecharon mas mal que bien, é con razon, porque los indios son todos desbarbados, como dicho he. Este puerto está del lugar donde estaba la gente cristiana doce leguas: pasados dos dias alzamos velas para el lugar donde el Almirante habia dejado la sobredicha gente, en compañía de un Rey destos indios, que se llamaba Guacamari, que pienso ser de los principales desta isla. Este dia llegamos en derecho de aquel lugar; pero era ya tarde, é porque allí habia unos bajos donde el otro dia se habia perdido la nao en que habia ido el Almirante, no osamos tomar el puerto cerca de tierra fasta que otro dia de mañana se desfondase é pudiesen entrar seguramente: quedamos aquella noche no una legua de tierra. Esa tarde, viniendo para allí de lejos, salió una canoa en que parecian cinco ó seis indios, los cuales venian á prisa para nosotros. El Almirante creyendo que nos seguraba hasta alzarnos, no quiso que los esperasemos, é porfiando llegaron hasta un tiro de lombarda de nosotros, é parabanse á mirar, é desde allí desque vieron que no los esperabamos dieron vuelta é tornaron su via. Despues que surgimos en aquel lugar sobredicho tarde, el Almirante mandó tirar dos lombardas á ver si respondian los cristianos que habian quedado con el dicho Guacamari, porque tambien tenian lombardas, los cuales nunca respondieron ni menos parecian huegos ni señal de casas en aquel lugar, de lo cual se desconsoló mucho la gente é tomaron la sospecha que de tal caso se debia tomar. Estando ansi todos muy tristes,

¹ The Yaqui, which formerly flowed into the bay of Monte Christi: it now enters the sea fifteen kilometres to the south.

² Guacanagari (cp. *supra*, p. 14, note 1).

were to be seen or sign of houses in that place, and from this the men were much depressed and formed the suspicion to which such a situation naturally gave rise.¹

All being thus very sad, and when four or five hours of the night had passed, the same canoe which we had seen this evening came, and it came with shouts, asking a captain of the caravel, where they first arrived, for the admiral. They were brought to the admiral's ship and were not willing to board her until the admiral spoke to them; they asked for a light in order to recognize him, and when they knew him, they came on board. One of them was a cousin of Guacamari who had sent them on the previous occasion. After they had turned back that evening, they brought masks of gold which Guacamari sent as a present; one was for the admiral and the other for a captain who had been with him on the previous voyage.

They were on the ship, talking with the admiral in the presence of all, for three hours. Showing much pleasure, he asked them concerning the Christians who had remained there. The relative of Guacamari said that they were all well, although some among them had died of sickness and others in a quarrel which had occurred among them,² and that Guacamari was in another place, wounded in his leg, and for this reason had not come, but that he would come another day, for two other kings, one called Caonabo and the other Mayreni,³ had come to fight with him and had burned his village. And afterwards on that night they went away, saying that they would come next day with the said Guacamari, and with that they left us comforted for that night.

Next day in the morning we waited for the said Guacamari to come, and meanwhile by order of the admiral some landed

¹ For the destruction of La Navidad, cp. the varying accounts in Las Casas (i. 86), Ferdinand Columbus (c. 48, 49), Peter Martyr (i. 2), Oviedo (ii. 12, 13), Syllacio (in Thacher, *Christopher Columbus*, ii. 253-5), and Cuneo (*Rac. Col.* III. ii. 98).

² According to Las Casas (i. 86), Pero Gutierrez and Rodrigo de Escovedo, who had been left at la Navidad as lieutenants to Diego de Arana, killed Jacome el Rico. Gutierrez had been *repostero de estrados del rey* (keeper of the royal hall of ceremony); when Columbus thought that he saw a light, just before land was sighted, he called Gutierrez who agreed that there was a light (*Journal*, 11 Oct.);

pasadas cuatro ó cinco horas de la noche, vino la misma canoa que esa tarde habíamos visto, é venia dando voces, preguntando por el Almirante un Capitan de una carabela donde primero llegaron: trajéronlos á la nao del Almirante, los cuales nunca quisieron entrar hasta que el Almirante los hablase; demandaron lumbré para lo conocer, é despues que lo conocieron entraron. Era uno dellos primo del Guacamari, el cual los habia enviado otra vez. Despues que se habian tornado aquella tarde traian caratulas de oro que Guacamari enviaba en presente; la una para el Almirante é la otra para un Capitan quel otro viage habia ido con él. Estovieron en la nao hablando con el Almirante en presencia de todos por tres horas mostrando mucho placer, preguntándoles por los Cristianos que tales estaban: aquel pariente dijo que estaban todos buenos, aunque entre ellos habia algunos muertos de dolencia é otros de diferencia que habia contecido entre ellos, é que Guacamari estaba en otro lugar ferido en una pierna é por eso no habia venido, pero que otro dia vernia; porque otros dos Reyes, llamado el uno Caonabó y el otro Mayrení, habian venido á pelear con él é que le habian quemado el logar; é luego esa noche se tornaron diciendo que otro dia vernian con el dicho Guacamari, é con esto nos dejaron por esa noche consolados. Otro dia en la mañana estovimos esperando que viniese el dicho Guacamari, é entretanto saltaron en tierra

he was one of those sent to announce the loss of the *Santa Maria* to Guacanagari (*Journal*, 25 Dec.). Rodrigo de Escovedo, secretary of the fleet, was a native of Segovia and a nephew of Fray Rodrigo Perez (*Journal*, 2 Jan.), who is to be identified with Fray Juan Perez, guardian of the monastery of La Rabida (Las Casas, i. 63). He had been one of those to land with Columbus on Guanahani (*Journal*, 11 Oct.). Jacome is described as 'el Rico' and as 'genovés' in the *Libro Manual* (fol. 29), and as 'Jacome Rico' in the *Cuenta general* (fol. 73). He is the only known Genoese who was on the first voyage of Columbus, and was perhaps the first Christian to die in the New World (cp. Gould y Quincy, *B.A.H.* 88, pp. 50-2).

³ Caonabo was 'king' of the district in which lay the mines of Cibao: he showed consistent hostility to the Spaniards and attacked the fort of St. Thomas (Las Casas, i. 92). Columbus, before leaving for the voyage of exploration in 1494, instructed Pedro Margarit to effect the capture of Caonabo (cp. *Rac. Col.* I. i. 284-8), and this capture was afterwards effected by Alonso de Ojeda (Las Casas, i. 102). Columbus decided to send him to Spain, but either he was drowned in a storm (Las Casas, *loc. cit.*) or died of grief on the voyage (Peter Martyr, i. 4). Mayreni is not otherwise known; he may have been one of the brothers of Caonabo.

and went to the place where they had often been. A certain building, more or less fortified with a palisade,¹ where the Christians had lived, they found burned, and the village itself burned and destroyed, and they found also some rags and clothes which the Indians had brought to throw into the house. Such Indians as did appear there went about very stealthily, and they did not dare to approach our men, but ran away. This did not look well to us, for the admiral had said that on arriving at that place, so many of their canoes would come alongside the ships to see us that we should not be able to keep them off, and that so it had been on the other voyage, and as we saw now that they were suspicious of our men, it did not seem well to us.

Nevertheless, on that day, making advances to them and giving them some presents, such as hawks' bells and beads, we reassured one, the relative of the said Guacamari, and three others, and they entered the boat and were brought to the ship. When they were asked about the Christians, they said that they were all dead. Although an Indian, one of those whom we had brought from Castile, who had been informed of it by the two Indians who had before come to the ship and who had remained alongside the ship with their canoe, had told us this already, we had not believed him. The relative of Guacamari was asked who had killed them; he said that it was the king of Caonabo² and king Mayreni, and that they burned the things of the village, and that many of them were wounded, and that the said Guacamari also had been wounded in the thigh, and that he was in another village and that he wished to go there at once to call him. To him some presents were made and he at once went away to the place where Guacamari was.

All that day we were waiting for them, and when we saw that they did not come, many fancied that the Indians who had come the night before had been drowned, for they had been given wine to drink two or three times and they came in a small canoe which might have been upset. Next day in the morning the admiral landed with some of our men, and

¹ According to Peter Martyr (i. 2), the Spaniards had been established in a species of blockhouse, surrounded by an earthwork.

algunos por mandado del Almirante, é fueron al lugar donde solian estar, é halláronle quemado un cortijo algo fuerte con una palizada, donde los Cristianos habitaban, é tenian lo suyo quemado é derribado, é ciertas bernias é ropas que los indios habian traído á echar en la casa. Los dichos indios que por allí parecian andaban muy cahareños, que no se osaban allegar á nosotros, antes huian; lo cual no nos pareció bien porque el Almirante nos habia dicho que en llegando á aquel lugar salian tantas canoas dellos á bordo de los navíos á vernos que no nos podriamos defender dellos, é que en el otro viage así lo facian; é como agora veíamos que estaban sospechosos de nosotros no nos parecia bien, con todo hálagándoles aquel dia é arrojándolos algunas cosas, ansi como cascabeles é cuentas, hobo de asegurarse un su pariente del dicho Guacamari é otros tres, los cuales entraron en la barca é trajéronlos á la nao. Despues que le preguntaron por los Cristianos dijeron que todos eran muertos, aunque ya nos lo habia dicho un indio de los que llevabamos de Castilla que lo habian hablado los dos indios que antes habian venido á la nao, que se habian quedado á bordo de la nao con su canoa, pero lo ne habiamos creído. Fue preguntado á este pariente de Guacamari quien los habia muerto: dijo que el Rey de Canoabó y el Rey Mayrení, é que le quemaron las cosas del lugar, é que estaban dellos muchos heridos, é tambien el dicho Guacamari estaba pasado un muslo, y él que estaba en otro lugar y que él queria ir luego allá á lo llamar, al cual dieron algunas cosas, é luego se partió para donde estaba Guacamari. Todo aquel dia los estobimos esperando, é desdeque vimos que no venian, muchos tenian sospecha que se habian ahogado los indios que antenoche habian venido, porque los habian dado á beber dos ó tres veces de vino, é venian en una canoa pequeña que se les podria trastornar. Otro dia de mañana salió á tierra el Almirante é algunos de nosotros, é fuemos donde solia estar la villa, la cual nos vimos toda quemada é los vestidos de los

² So in the original. The Spaniards were very often uncertain whether a name was that of a cacique or that of his territory: this is notably the case in the various caciques of Castilla del Oro. Examples are to be found in *Española*, e.g. Cayacoa is the name of a district to Las Casas (*Apol. Hist.* c. 4) and of a cacique to Oviedo (iii. 4).

We went to the place where the town had been, and we saw that it was entirely burned and the clothes of the Christians were found in some grass. On that occasion, we did not see any corpses.

Among us there were many different opinions. Some suspected that Guacamari himself was concerned in the betrayal or death of the Christians, and others thought that he was not, since his town was burned; the matter was, indeed, very doubtful. The admiral commanded all the ground where the Christians had fortified themselves to be searched, since he had given orders to them that, when they obtained any quantity of gold, they should bury it. While this was being done, he wished to go to view a place at about a league's distance, where it appeared to us that a site might be found where a town could be built, for it was now time for this. Certain men went there with him, examining the country along the coast, until we arrived at a hamlet where there were seven or eight houses, which the Indians had abandoned as soon as they saw us coming. They carried away what they could and left the rest hidden in the undergrowth near the houses. These people are so degraded that they have not intelligence enough to seek out a suitable place in which to live. As for those who live on the shore, it is marvellous how barbarously they build, for the houses situated there were so covered with green or damp, that it is astonishing how they exist.

In those houses we found many belongings of the Christians which it could not be believed that they should have bartered, such as a very handsome Moorish mantle, which had not been unfolded since they brought it from Castile, and stockings and pieces of cloth, and an anchor of the ship which the admiral had lost there on the previous voyage, and other things, from which our opinion was the more confirmed. And there, examining the things which they had packed in a wicker basket, carefully sewn up and well concealed, we found the head of a man, well hidden. From this we then concluded that it might be the head of a father or mother, or of some person whom they greatly loved. Since then I have heard that many like this have been found, from which I believe

Cristianos se hallaban por aquella yerba. Por aquella hora no vimos ningun muerto. Habia entre nosotros muchas razones diferentes, unos sospechando que el mismo Guacamarí fuese en la traicion ó muerte de los Cristianos, otros les parecia que no, pues estaba quemada su villa, así que la cosa era mucho para dudar. El Almirante mandó catar todo el sitio donde los Cristianos estaban fortalecidos porquel los habia mandado que desque toviesen alguna cantidad de oro que lo enterrasen. Entretanto que esto se hacia quiso llegar á ver á cerca de una legua do nos parecia que podria haber asiento para poder edificar una villa porque ya era tiempo, adonde fuimos ciertos con él mirando la tierra por la costa, fasta que llegamos á un poblado donde habia siete ú ocho casas, las quales habian desamparado los indios luego que nos vieron ir, é llevaron lo que pudieron é lo otro dejaron escondido entre yerbas junto con las casas, que es gente tan bestial que no tienen discrecion para buscar lugar para habitar, que los que viven á la marina es maravilla cuan bestialmente edifican, que las casas enderedor tienen tan cubiertas de yerba ó de humedad, que estoy espantado como viven. En aquellas casas hallamos muchas cosas de los Cristianos, las cuales no se creian que ellos hobiesen rescatado, así como una almalafa muy gentil, la cual no se habia descogido de como la llevaron de Castilla, é calzas é pedazos de paños, é una ancla de la nao quel Almirante habia allí perdido el otro viage, é otras cosas, de las cuales mas se esforzó nuestra opinion; y de acá hallamos, buscando las cosas que tenian guardadas en una esportilla mucho cosida é mucho á recabdo, una cabeza de hombre mucho guardada. Allí juzgamos por entonces que seria la cabeza de padre ó madre, ó de persona que mucho querian. Despues he oido que hayan hallado muchas desta manera, por donde creo ser verdad lo que allí juzgamos; desde allí nos tornamos. Aquel dia venimos por donde estaba la villa, y cuando llegamos hallamos muchos indios que se habian asegurado y estaban rescatando oro: tenian rescatado fasta un marco: hallamos que habian mostrado donde estaban muertos once cristianos, cubiertos ya de la yerba que habia crecido sobre ellos, é todos hablaban por una boca que

that conclusion which we then reached to be the truth. After that, we returned.

That day we came to the place where the town had been, and when we arrived there, we found many Indians, who were reassured and were bartering gold. They had bartered to the value of a mark. We found that they had shown where eleven dead Christians were, already covered by the grass which had grown over them. All with one voice said that Caonabo and Mayreni had killed them. But with all this they began to complain that the Christians had taken, one three, another four women, from which we came to believe that the evil which had fallen on them was the result of jealousy.

Next day, in the morning, since in all that district there was no place suitable for us to be able to form a settlement, the admiral decided that a caravel should go in one direction to search for a convenient site, and that some of us should go with him in another direction. There we found a very safe harbour and land very suited for habitation. As, however, it was very far from where we wished to be, which was near the mine of gold, the admiral decided not to form a settlement there but in another place which was more certainly near it, if a convenient situation could be found.

When we returned from this place, we found that there had arrived the other caravel which had proceeded in another direction to search for the said place, in which had gone Melchior¹ and four or five other men of worth. And as they went coasting along the land, a canoe had come out to them, in which were two Indians, one of them the brother of Guacamari, who was known to a pilot who went in the said caravel. He asked who went there. The chief men reported that they told the man that Guacamari asked them to come ashore, to the place where he was staying with some fifty houses. The said chief men landed in the boat and went to where he was, and they found him, stretched on his bed, complaining that he was suffering from a wound. They talked with him, asking about the Christians. He answered, in agreement with the statement of the others, that it was Caonabo and Mayreni who had killed them, and that they

¹ Melchior Maldonado had been sent by Ferdinand and Isabella to announce

asomaban queja que los Cristianos uno tenia tres mugeres, otro cuatro, donde creemos quel mal que les vino fue de zelos. Otro dia de mañana, porque en todo aquello no habia lugar dispuesto para nosotros poder hacer asiento, acordó el Almirante fuese una carabela á una parte para mirar lugar conveniente, é algunos que fuimos con él fuimos á otra parte, á do hallamos un puerto muy seguro é muy gentil disposicion de tierra para habitar, pero porque estaba lejos de donde nos deseabamos que estaba la mina de oro, no acordó el Almirante de poblar sino en otra parte que fuese mas cierta si se hallase conveniente disposicion. Cuando venimos deste lugar hallamos venida la otra carabela que habia ido á la otra parte á buscar el dicho lugar, en la cual habia ido Melchior é otros cuatro ó cinco hombres de pro. E yendo costeando por tierra salió á ellos una canoa en que venian dos indios, el uno era hermano de Guacamari, el cual fue conocido por un piloto que iba en la dicha carabela, é preguntó quien iba allí, al cual, dijeron los hombres prencipales, dijeron que Guacamari les rogaba que se llegasen á tierra, donde él tenia su asiento con fasta cincuenta casas. Los dichos prencipales saltaron en tierra con la barca é fueron donde él estaba, el cual fallaron en su cama echado haciendo del doliente ferido. Fablaron con él preguntándole por los Cristianos: respondió concertando con la mesma razon de los otros, que era que Caonabó é Mayreni los habian muerto, é que á él habian ferido en un muslo, el cual mostró ligado; los que entonces lo vieron así les pareció que era verdad como él lo dijo: al tiempo del despedirse dió á cada uno dellos una joya de oro, á cada uno como le pareció que lo merecia. Este oro facian en fojas muy delgadas, porque lo quieren para facer carátulas é para poderse asentar en betun que ellos facen, si así no fuese no se asentaria. Otro facen para traer en la cabeza é para colgar en las orejas é narices, así que todavía es menester que sea delgado, pues

the fall of Malaga to the pope (1487) (Peter Martyr, i. 2). He was engaged on the preparations for the second voyage (*Doc. Inéd. relativos al descubrimiento . . .* (1ª serie), 30, p. 158). He was reluctant to go on the voyage, but was ordered to do so by the sovereigns, the comendador mayor de Leon being instructed to make provision for his household during his absence (*Doc. Inéd. (1ª serie)*, 30, p. 182-3, Letter, 4 Aug. 1493).

had wounded him in the thigh, which he showed bandaged. When they saw him thus, it appeared to them that what he said was true. At the time of their departure, he gave to each of them a jewel of gold, to each according as each seemed to merit.

This gold they fashion in very thin plates, since they wish to make masks of it, and to be able to do so, they set it in bitumen which they prepare, for if it were not so, it would not be suitable. They fashion other gold to wear on the head and to hang in the ears and nostrils, and for this also it is necessary that it should be thin, since they do not regard this as riches save for its showy appearance.

The said Guacamari said by signs and as well as he could that, as he was so wounded, they should say to the admiral that he wished him to come to see him. As soon as the admiral arrived, the aforesaid men recounted this story to him. Next day, in the morning, he decided to set out for that place, where we could go within three hours, for it was hardly three leagues there from where we were, but as it would be the hour of eating when we arrived there, we ate before going ashore. When we had eaten, the admiral commanded that all the captains should come in their boats to go ashore, for already on this morning, before we set out from where we were, the said brother had come to speak with the admiral, and to urge him to go to the place where the said Guacamari was.

The admiral went ashore there and all the people of importance with him, so richly dressed that they would have made a good show in a capital city. He took some things as presents, because he had already received an appreciable amount of gold from him, and it was right that he should respond to the action and good will which he had shown. The said Guacamari himself was also prepared to make a present to him. When we arrived, we found him stretched on his bed,¹ as they have them, a bed, made of cotton, like a net, hung in the air. He did not get up, but from the bed made as much show of courtesy as he could. He exhibited much feeling, with tears in his eyes for the death of the Christians, and began to talk, showing, as well as he was able, how some had died of disease and how others had gone to Caonabo to search for the mine

que ellos nada desto hacen por riqueza salvo por buen parecer. Dijo el dicho Guacamari por señas e como mejor pudo, que porque él estaba así herido que dijese al Almirante que quisiese venir á verlo. Luego quel Almirante llegó los sobredichos le contaron este caso. Otro dia de mañana acordó partir para allá, al cual lugar llegaríamos dentro de tres horas, porque apenas habria dende donde estábamos allá tres leguas; así que cuando allí llegamos era hora de comer: comimos ante de salir en tierra. Luego que hobimos comido mandó el Almirante que todos los Capitanes viniesen con sus barcas para ir en tierra, porque ya esa mañana antes que partiésemos de donde estábamos habia venido el sobredicho su hermano á hablar con el Almirante, é á darle priesa que fuese al lugar donde estaba el dicho Guacamari. Allí fue el Almirante á tierra é toda la gente de pro con él, tan ataviados que en una cibdad prencipal parecieran bien: llevó algunas cosas para le presentar porque ya habia recibido dél alguna cantidad de oro, é era razon le respondiese con la obra é voluntad quel habia mostrado. El dicho Guacamari así mismo tenia aparejado para hacerle presente. Cuando llegamos hallámosle echado en su cama, como ellos lo usan, colgado en el aire, fecha una cama de algodón como de red; no se levantó, salvo dende la cama hizo el semblante de cortesía como él mejor sopó, mostró mucho sentimiento con lágrimas en los ojos por la muerte de los Cristianos, é comenzó á hablar en ello mostrando, como mejor podia, como unos murieron de dolencia, é como otros se habian ido á Caonabó á buscar la mina del oro é que allí los habian muerto, é los otros que se los habian venido á matar allí en su villa. A lo que parecían los cuerpos de los muertos no habia dos meses que habia acaecido. Esa hora el presentó al Almirante ocho marcos y medio de oro, é cinco ó seiscientos labrados de pedrería de diversos colores, é un bonete de la misma pedrería, lo cual me parece debén tener ellos en mucho. En el bonete estaba un joyel, lo cual le dió en mucha veneración. Paraceme que tienen en mas el cobre quel oro. Estábamos presentes yo y un zurugiano de

¹ Peter Martyr (*Dec.* i. 2) says that his bed was surrounded by those of his seven concubines.

of gold and that there they had been killed, and that as for the rest they had come to slay them there in his town. From the appearance of the bodies of the dead, it was not two months since this had happened.¹

At this time he presented the admiral with eight and a half marks of gold, and five or six hundred cut stones of various colours, and a cap with the same jewellery, which it seems to me that they must value greatly. On the cap was a jewel, which he gave to him with much reverence. It appears to me that they set more store by copper than by gold.

I and a surgeon of the fleet were present. The admiral therefore told the said Guacamari that we had knowledge of the ailments of men that he might consent to show us the wound. He answered that he was willing, upon which I told him that it would be necessary, if he could, that he should go out of the house, because from the throng of people, it was dark and it was impossible to see well. He did so at once; I believe rather from timidity than from good will. He went outside leaning on an arm. After he was seated, the surgeon went to him and began to unbandage him. He then said to the admiral that the wound had been made with a *ciba*, which means to say, with a stone. When he was unbandaged, we came to examine him. It is certain that he had no more wound on that leg than on the other, although he cunningly made out that it pained him greatly.²

Certainly the matter could not well be decided, for the facts were unknown, and there were clearly many things which pointed to a hostile people having come against him. The admiral therefore did not know what to do. It appeared to him and to many others that for the present, until the truth could be better known, it was right to dissemble, since after gaining knowledge, it would be possible to secure from him whatever reparation might be desired.³

And that evening he came with the admiral to the ships, and the horses and what we had there were shown to him. At this he was very astonished as being something unknown to him. He took supper on the ship, and this evening returned

¹ Cuneo (*loc. cit.*) says that from the appearance of the bodies found, the disaster must have occurred some fifteen or twenty days earlier.

armada; entonces dijo el Almirante al dicho Guacamari que nosotros eramos sabios de las enfermedades de los hombres que nos quisiese mostrar la herida: él respondió que le placia, para lo cual yo dije que seria necesario, si pudiese, que saliese fuera de casa, porque con la mucha gente estaba oscura é no se podria ver bien; lo cual él fizo luego, creo mas de empacho que de gana; arrimándose á él salió fuera. Despues de asentado, llegó el zurugiano á él é comenzó de desligarle: entonces dijo al Almirante que era ferida fecha con ciba, que quiere decir con piedra. Despues que fue desatada llegamos á tentarle. Es cierto que no tenia mas mal en aquella que en la otra, aunque él hacia del raposo que le dolia mucho. Ciertamente no se podia bien determinar porque las razones eran ignotas, que ciertamente muchas cosas habia que mostraban haber venido á él gente contraria. Ansimesmo el Almirante no sabia que se hacer: parecióle, é á otros muchos, que por entonces fasta bien saber la verdad que se debia disimular, porque despues de sabida, cada que quisiesen, se podia dél recibir enmienda. E aquella tarde se vino con el Almirante á las naos, é mostráronle caballos é cuanto ahí habia, de lo cual quedó muy maravillado como de cosa estraña á él; tomó colacion en la nao, é esa tarde luego se tornó á su casa: el Almirante dijo que queria ir á habitar allí con él é queria facer casas, y él respondió que le placia, pero que el lugar era mal sano porque era muy humido, é tal era él por cierto. Esto todo pasaba estando por intérpretes dos indios de los que el otro viage habian ido á Castilla, los cuales habian quedado vivos de siete que metimos en el puerto, que los cinco se murieron en el camino, los cuales escaparon á uña de caballo. Otro dia estuvimos surtos en aquel puerto; é quiso saber

² Las Casas (i. 86) says that Guacanagari showed his 'wounds', and does not hint that there was any doubt concerning their genuineness. Peter Martyr (*Dec.* i. 2) says that Columbus sent Melchior Maldonado to Guacanagari, that he found the cacique feigning illness, and that he undid the bandages but could find no trace of a wound. It is possible that Maldonado was acting as a surgeon, or that Martyr mistook the visit of Melchior to Guacanagari for that which was paid by Chanea.

³ Fray Buil and others advocated the immediate arrest of Guacanagari, but this course of action was considered to be inadvisable by Columbus (Las Casas, i. 86, and Peter Martyr, i. 2).

to his house. The admiral told him that he wished to settle there with him and wished to build houses, and he answered that it pleased him, but that the place was unhealthy, because it was very damp, and such was in fact the case. All this passed, there acting as interpreters two Indians of those who on the previous voyage had gone to Castile and who had remained alive of the seven whom we embarked in the port, for five of them died on the voyage and the others escaped by a hair's breadth.

The next day we remained anchored in that harbour. And he wished to know when the admiral would depart; he ordered him to be told, on the next day. That day there came to the ship his afore-mentioned brother and others with him and brought with them some gold to barter. So on the day that we left there, a good amount of gold was exchanged.

In the ship there were ten women of those whom we had taken in the islands of the Caribs; most of them were from Boriquen. That brother of Guacamari talked with them; as we believe, he told them to do that which they did immediately on this night. And it was that, in the first watch, they threw themselves very quietly into the water and made their way ashore, so that by the time that they were missed, they had gone such a distance that with the boats they were unable to take more than four, whom they took as they were coming out of the water. They swam more than a full half league. On the morning of the next day, the admiral sent to Guacamari to tell him that he should send to him those women who had fled the night before and that he should command immediate search to be made for them. When they arrived, they found the village abandoned by its inhabitants, so that there was not a soul in it. As a result many were encouraged to declare their suspicion; others said that there might have been a move to another village, for these people are wont to act in this way.¹

That day we remained there quietly, because the weather was unsuitable for departure. On the next day, in the morning, the admiral decided that, as the weather was unfavourable, it would be well to go in the boats to examine a harbour,

Cuando se partiría el Almirante: le mandó decir que otro día. En aquel día vinieron á la nao el sobredicho hermano suyo é otros con él, é trajeron algun oro para rescatar. Ansí mesmo el día que allá salimos se rescató buena cantidad de oro. En la nao habia diez mugeres de las que se habian tomado en las islas de Cariby; eran las mas dellas de Boriquen. Aquel hermano de Guacamari habló con ellas: creemos que les dijo lo que luego esa noche pusieron por obra, y es que al primer sueño muy mansamente se echaron al agua é se fueron á tierra, de manera que cuando fueron falladas menos iban tanto trecho que con las barcas no pudieron tomar mas de las cuatro, las cuales tomaron al salir del agua; fueron nadando mas de una gran media legua. Otro día de mañana envió el Almirante á decir á Guacamari que le enviase aquellas mugeres que la noche antes se habian huido, é que luego las mandase buscar. Cuando fueren hallaron el lugar despoblado, que no estaba persona en el: ahí tornaron muchos fuerte á afirmar su sospecha, otros decian que se habria mudado á otra poblacion quellos ansí lo suelen hacer. Aquel día estovimos allí quedos por que el tiempo era contrario para salir: otro día de mañana acordó el Almirante, pues que el tiempo era contrario, que seria bien ir con las barcas á ver un puerto la costa arriba, fasta el cual habria dos leguas, para ver si habria disposicion de tierra para hacer habitacion; donde fuimos con todas las barcas de los navíos, dejando los navíos en el puerto. Fuimos corriendo toda la costa, é tambien estos no se seguraban bien de nosotros; llegamos á un lugar de donde todos eran huidos. Andando por él fallamos junto con las casas, metido en el monte, un indio ferido de una vara, de una ferida que resollaba por las espaldas, que no habia podido huir mas lejos. Los desta isla pelean con unas varas agudas, las cuales tiran con unas tiranderas como las que tiran los mochos las varillas en Castilla, con las cuales tiran muy lejos asaz certero. Es cierto que para gente desarmada que pueden

¹ One of these women was called Catalina: they are said to have swum about three miles (Peter Martyr, *Dec.* i. 2). According to Martyr, it was Guacamarí who talked to Catalina and was presumed to have suggested her flight.

distant two leagues farther along the coast, to see if the character of the land was suitable for forming a settlement. We went there with all the boats of the fleet, leaving the ships in the harbour. We went running all along the coast, and the natives there also were not reassured about our men; we reached a village from which all had fled. Walking through it, we found near the houses, lying on the mountain, an Indian wounded with a dart, with a wound which gaped between the shoulders, who had not been able to escape farther. The people of this island fight with sharp darts, which they shoot from slings as boys shoot their small darts in Castile, and they shoot them a considerable distance with much accuracy. It is certain that for an unarmed people they can do great damage. This man told us that Caonabo and his men had wounded him and had burned the houses of Guacamari. Thus from the small understanding which we have of them and from the dubious accounts which they have given us, all so confused, up to now it has not been possible to know the truth of the death of our people.

In that harbour also we did not find the character of the land suitable for making a settlement. The admiral decided that we should return up the coast towards where we had come from Castile, because there was news of gold in that direction. The weather was contrary to us, so that it was more labour for us to go back thirty leagues than to come from Castile. As a result of the unfavourable weather and the length of the voyage, three months had already passed when we landed. It pleased our Lord that, owing to the contrary weather which did not allow us to go farther onward, we had to land at the best and most favourable site which we could have found. There is there a very good harbour and much fishing, of which we were in great need owing to the lack of meat.¹

The fish of this land is very strange and more wholesome than that of Spain.² It is true that the climate, being hot and damp, does not allow it to be kept from one day to the next, for animal food quickly becomes putrid. The land is very rich for all purposes.³ Near by there is one main river, and

¹ The site selected was ten leagues east of Monte Christi, on the Puerto de la

hacer harto daño. Este nos dijo que Caonabó é los suyos lo habian ferido, é habian quemado las casas á Guacamari. Así quel poco entender que los entendemos é las razones equívocas nos han traído á todos tan afuscados que fasta agora no se ha podido saber la verdad de la muerte de nuestra gente, é no hallamos en aquel puerto disposicion saludable parer hacer habitacion. Acordó el Almirante nos tornásemos por la costa arriba por do habíamos venido de Castilla, porque la nueva del oro era fasta allá. Fuenos el tiempo contrario, que mayor pena nos fue tornar treinta leguas atrás que venir desde Castilla, que con el tiempo contrario é la largueza del camino ya eran tres meses pasados cuando descendimos en tierra. Plugó á nuestro Señor que por la contrariedad del tiempo que no nos dejó ir mas adelante, hobimos de tomar tierra en el mejor sitio y disposicion que pudieramos escoger, donde hay mucho buen puerto é gran pesquería, de la cual tenemos mucha necesidad por el carecimiento de las carnes. Hay en esta tierra muy singular pescado mas sano quel de España. Verdad sea que la tierra no consiente que se guarde de un dia para otro porque es caliente é húmida, é por ende luego las cosas introfatibles ligeramente se corrompen. La tierra es muy gruesa para todas cosas; tiene junto un rio prencipal é otro razonable, asaz cerca de muy singular agua: edificase sobre la ribera dél una cibdad Marta, junto quel lugar se deslinda con el agua, de manera que la mitad de la cibdad queda cercada de agua con una barranca de peña tajada, tal que por allí no ha menester defensa ninguna; la otra mitad está cercada de una arboleda espesa que apenas podrá un conejo andar por ella; es tan verde que en ningun tiempo del mundo fuego la podrá quemar: hase comenzado á traer un brazo del rio, el cual dicen los maestros que trairán por medio del lugar,

Gracias; it was fifty miles west of the modern Puerto Plata. For the report of reconnaissance of the site of Isabella by U.S.S. *Enterprise* in 1891, see Thacher (*op. cit.*, ii. 283, note 1), where will be found a plan of the few remaining ruins. Isabella was abandoned in favour of Santo Domingo two years later, and was left desolate: the site was supposed to be haunted (*cp.* Las Casas, i. 92).

² For the fish of Española, *cp.* Oviedo, Bk. xii.

³ On the extreme fertility of the land round Isabella, see Syllacio (Thacher, ii. 257), and *infra*, p. 84 and note 1.

another of reasonable size, not far off, with very remarkable water.¹

On the bank of one a city, Marta,² is being built, one side being bounded by the water with a ravine of cleft rock, so that no defensive work is needed on that side. The other side is protected by a wood, so thick that a rabbit could scarcely pass through it, and so green that never at all will fire be able to burn it. They have begun to canalize a branch of the river, and the foremen say that they will bring this through the centre of the town and that they will place on it mills and water wheels and whatever can be worked with water. They have sown many vegetables, and it is certain that they grow more in eight days than they do in twenty in Spain.

There come here constantly many Indians and with them *caciques*, who are like commanders among them, and many Indian women. All come laden with *ages*,³ which are like turnips, very excellent for food; of these we make here many kinds of food-stuffs in various ways. It is so sustaining to eat that it comforts us all greatly, for in truth the life which has been spent on the sea has been the most straitened that ever men went through, and it was necessarily so because we did not know what weather we should have or how long God would allow that we should be on the voyage. So it was prudent that we should ration ourselves, so that, however long we might be in coming, we should be able to support life. They barter the gold and provisions and all that they bring for ends of straps, for beads, for pins, for fragments of dishes and plates. This *age* the Caribs call *nabi*, and the Indians *hage*.

All these people, as I have said, go about as they were born, except that the women of this island have their privy parts covered, some of them with a cotton cloth which they bind round their hips, others with grass and the leaves of trees. The decoration of men and women among them is to paint themselves, some with black, others with white and red, becoming such sights that to see them is good reason for

¹ There seems to have been actually only one river, the Rio Isabella; probably the other was a mere torrent, flowing in rainy weather.

é asentarán en él moliendas é sierras de agua, é cuanto se pudiere hacer con agua. Han sembrado mucha hortaliza, la cual es cierto que crece mas en ocho dias que en España en veinte. Vienen aquí continuamente muchos indios é caciques con ellos, que son como capitanes dellos, é muchas indias: todos víenen cargados de *ages*, que son como nabos, muy excelente manjar, de los cuales facemos acá muchas maneras de manjares en cualquier manera; es tanto cordial manjar que nos tiene á todos muy consolados, porque de verdad la vida que se trajo por la mar ha seido la mas estrecha que nunca hombres pasaron, é fue así necesario porque no sabiamos que tiempo nos haria, ó cuanto permitiría Dios que estoviesemos en el camino; así que fue cordura estrecharnos, porque cualquier tiempo que viniera pudieramos conservar la vida. Rescatan el oro é mantenimientos é todo lo que traen por cabos de agujetas, por cuentas, por alfileres, por pedazos de escudillas é de plateles. A este *age* llaman los de Caribi *nabi*, é los indios *hage*. Toda esta gente, como dicho tengo, andan como nacieron, salvo las mugeres de esta isla traen cubiertas sus verguenzas, dellas con ropa de algodón que les ciñen las caderas, otras con yerbas é fojas de árboles. sus galas dellos é dellas es pintarse, unos de negro, otros de blanco é colorado, de tantos visajes que en verlos es bien cosa de reir; las cabezas rapadas en logares, é en logares con vedijas de tantas maneras que no se podria escrebir. En conclusion, que todo lo que allá en nuestra España quieren hacer en la cabeza de un loco, acá el mejor dellos vos lo terná en mucha merced. aquí estamos en comarea de muchas minas de ora, que segun lo que ellos dicen no hay cada una dellas de veinte ó veinte é cinco leguas: las unas dicen que son en Niti, en poder de Caonabó, aquel que mató los cristianos; otras hay en otra

² There is no evidence that the city was called Marta, and this seems to be an error on the part of Chancé. Syllacio (Thacher, ii, p. 258) fancies that the island was called 'Isola Bella', and that the city was similarly named, on account of the extreme fertility of the soil. The city no doubt received its name in honour of the queen.

³ Yams (cp. Oviedo, vii. 3).

laughter.¹ Their heads are shaved in places and in places have tufts of tangled hair of such shapes that it cannot be described. In conclusion, whatever there in our Spain they might wish to do to the head of a madman, here the best of them would regard as a great honour.

Here we are in the neighbourhood of many mines of gold, no one of which, according to what they say, is more than twenty or twenty-five leagues distant. Some, they say, are in Niti,² in the dominion of Caonabo, he who killed the Christians; others are in another district which is called Cibao, which, if it please our Lord, we shall know and see with our eyes before many days pass. For the journey would be made now, were it not that there are so many things to provide that we are not equal to all. In four or five days, a third of the men have fallen sick. I believe that the chief cause of this has been the labour and privations of the voyage; further, the changes of climate.³ But I hope in our Lord that all will be restored to health.

That which appears concerning this people is that if we could talk with them, all would be converted, for whatever they see us do, they do the same, bending the knees to the altars and at the Ave Maria, and at other devotions and crossing themselves. All say that they wish to be Christians, although actually they are idolaters, because in their houses they have images of various kinds. I have asked them, 'what is that?' and they tell me that it is a thing of *Turey*, by which they mean Heaven. I made as if I wished to throw the objects into the fire and they took it so ill that they were on the point of tears. But in the same way they think that whatever we bring is a thing from Heaven, for they call everything *Turey*, which means to say Heaven.

The day on which I went ashore to sleep was the first day of the Lord. The little time which we have spent on land has been more spent in making ready the place where we are to settle and in seeking for necessary things than in finding out what things there are in the country. But although the time has been short, things very wonderful have been seen. For there have been seen trees which bear wool and sufficiently

¹ The natives used the fruit of the *jagua* to make a black dye and that of the

parte que se llama Cibao, las cuales, si place á nuestro Señor, sabremos é veremos con los ojos antes que pasen muchos dias, porque agora se ficiera sino porque hay tantas cosas de proveer que no bastamos para todo, porque la gente ha adolecido en cuatro ó cinco dias el tercio della, creo la mayor causa dello ha seido el trabajo é mala pasada del camino, allende de la diversidad de la tierra; pero espero en nuestro Señor que todos se levantarán con salud. Lo que parece desta gente es que si lengua toviesemos que todos se convertirian, porque cuanto nos veen facer tanto facen, en hincar las rodillas á los altares, é al Ave Maria, é á las otras devociones é santiguarse, todos dicen que quieren ser cristianos, puesto que verdaderamente son idólatras, porque en sus casas hay figuras de muchas maneras; yo les he preguntado que es aquello, dicenme que es cosa de *Turey*, que quiere decir del cielo. Yo acometi á querer echarselos en el fuego é haciaseles de mal que querian llorar, pero así piensan que cuanto nosotros tracemos que es cosa del cielo, que á todo llaman *Turey*, que quiere decir cielo. El dia que yo salí á dormir en tierra fue el primero dia del Señor: el poco tiempo que habemos gastado en tierra ha seido mas en hacer donde nos metamos, é buscar las cosas necesarias, que en saber las cosas que hay en la tierra, pero aunque ha sido poco se han visto cosas bien de maravillar, que se han visto árboles que llévan lana y harto fina, tal que los que saben del arte dicen que podrán hacer buenos paños dellos. Destos árboles hay tantos que se podrán cargar las carabelas de la lana, aunque es trabajosa de coger, porque los árboles son muy espinosos; pero bien se puede hallar ingenio para la

bixa to make a vermilion dye (Oviedo, viii. 8, 9). By means of the fruit of the *guao*, the native women, after the coming of the Spaniards, endeavoured to make themselves white: Oviedo (ix. 34) says that they were successful, but adds that while they thus secured physical, they did not secure moral whiteness.

² This was the district between the rivers Neiba and Yaqui, where the town of San Juan de la Maguana was afterwards built by order of Nicolas de Ovando (cp. Las Casas, ii. 18; Oviedo, iii. 12; and Herrera, *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales*, c. vi).

³ By the Spaniards themselves, their sickness was partly, if not mainly, attributed to the excessive labour imposed upon them by Columbus in the building of Isabella (cp. Las Casas, i. 88; Herrera, *Historia General*, i. 2. x).

fine, so that those who know the art say that good cloth could be made from them. Of these trees, there are so many that the caravels could be loaded with the wool, although it is laborious to gather, because the trees are very thorny, but it is very possible to find some means for gathering it.¹

There is an infinite amount of cotton from trees as large as peach trees. There are trees which bear wax, in colour and taste and for burning as good as that of bees, so that there is little difference between the one and the other. There are innumerable trees producing turpentine, very remarkable and of very fine quality. There is much tragacanth, also very good. There are trees which, I think, bear nutmegs, but they were so far without fruit, and I say that I think this because the taste and smell of the bark is like that of nutmegs. I saw a root of ginger which an Indian carried hanging round his neck. There are also aloes, although not of the kind which has hitherto been seen in our parts, but there is no doubt that they are one of the species of aloes which doctors use. There is also found a kind of cinnamon; it is true that it is not so fine as that which is known at home. We do not know whether by chance this is due to lack of knowledge of the time to gather it when it should be gathered, or whether by chance the land does not produce better. Also there have been found yellow mirabolans, but at the moment they were only lying under the tree, and as the land is very damp, they are rotten and have a very bitter taste, as I believe, because of the decay. But in every other respect, except for the taste which is that of rotten fruit, it is the true mirabolan. There is also very good mastic.²

None of the people of these islands, as far as they have been seen yet, possess any iron. They have many tools, such as hatchets and axes, made of stone, so handsome and so fashioned, that it is marvellous how they are able to make them without iron. Their food is bread made of the roots of a plant which is between a tree and a vegetable, and the *age*, of which I have already said that it is like turnips and very nourishing. They use, to flavour it, a spice which is called *agi*,³

¹ Ceiba (ep. Oviedo, ix. 11).

coger. Hay infinito algodón de árboles perpetuos tan grandes como duraznos. Hay árboles que llevan cera en color y en sabor é en arder tan buena como la de abejas, tal que no hay diferencia mucha de la una á la otra. Hay infinitos árboles de trementina muy singular é muy fina. Hay mucho alquitira, tambien muy buena. Hay árboles que pienso que llevan nueces moscadas, salvo que agora estan sin fruto, é digo que lo pienso porque el sabor y olor de la corteza es como de nueces moscadas. Vi una raiz de gengibre que la traía un indio colgada al cuello. Hay tambien linaloe, aunque no es de la manera del que fasta agora se ha visto en nuestras partes; pero no es de dudar que sea una de las especias de linaloes que los doctores ponemos. Tambien se ha hallado una manera de canela, verdad es que no es tan fina como la que allá se ha visto, no sabemos si por ventura lo hace el defeto de saberla coger en sus tiempos como se ha de coger, ó si por ventura la tierra no la lleva mejor. Tambien se ha hallado mirabolanos cetrinos, salvo que agora no estan sino debajo del árbol, como la tierra es muy humida estan podridos, tienen el sabor mucho amargo, yo creo sea del podrimiento; pero todo lo otro, salvo el sabor que está corrompido, es de mirabolanos verdaderos. Hay tambien almástica muy buena. Todas estas gentes destas islas, que fasta agora se han visto, no poseen fierro ninguno. Tienen muchas ferramientas, ansi como hachas é azuelas hechas de piedra tan gentiles é tan labradas que es maravilla

² For the following notes upon the various trees, I am indebted to Dr. A. B. Rendle, late Keeper of Botany in the Natural History Museum. The trees bearing 'wool' are probably the *Ceiba pentandra* Gaertn. Those producing 'cotton' are probably a species of *Gossypium*; 'wax', probably the 'Candleberry myrtle', *Myrica cerifera* L.; turpentine, 'the Turpentine tree', *Bursera Simaruba* Sarg.; tragacanth, perhaps 'Cashew', *Anacardium occidentale* L. The nutmeg cannot be identified. The 'ginger' is probably a species of *Renealmia*: *R. antillarum* (Roem. and Schult.) Gagnep., one of the species found in Española, is known to the natives as 'ginembre marron', according to K. Schumann, *Das Pflanzenreich*, iv. 46, p. 206. 'Aloes' is probably *Agave americana* L.; 'cinnamon', 'wild cinnamon', *Canella Winterana* Gaertn. The 'mirabolan' (which is declared by Oviedo (viii. 2) to be the *hobo* and to have been mistaken for mirabolan), is probably the 'Hog Plum', *Spondias Monbin* L. The mastic is probably also *Bursera Simaruba* Sarg.

³ Agi: Indian pepper (cp. Oviedo, vii. 7). This was the only spice actually occurring in the Indies.

which they also eat with fish, as well as with birds when they can get them; there are an infinite number of many kinds. They have also some grain like hazel nuts, very good to eat.¹ They eat all the snakes and lizards and spiders and all the worms which are found in the ground.² So it seems to me that their degradation is greater than that of any beast in the world.

After the admiral had at one time determined to leave the discovery of the mines until he had first dispatched the ships which were to leave for Castile, on account of the great amount of illness that there had been among the people, he resolved to send out two companies under two captains,³ one to Cibao and the other to Niti, where Caonabo is, of whom I have already spoken. They went and returned, one on the twentieth day of January and the other on the twenty-first. The one who went to Cibao found gold in so many parts that a man hardly dares say it, for in fact they found gold in more than fifty streams and rivers, and out of the rivers on the land, so that in all that province he says that wherever they care to look, they will find it. He brought evidence from many parts, as from the sand of the rivers and from the springs which are in the country. It is believed that by digging, as we know how to dig, it will be found in larger pieces, for the Indians do not know how to dig nor have they anything with which they are able to dig more than a hand's depth. The other, who went to Niti, also brought news of much gold in three or four parts; he also brought evidence of it.

Thus surely the sovereigns, our lords, can henceforth regard themselves as being the most prosperous and richest princes in the world. For such a thing has up to now not been seen

¹ Perhaps the nuts described by Oviedo (x. 4), which were not suited to all and which being used medicinally might be expected to have been of special interest to Chanca.

² One of the chief delicacies of the Indians was the *iguana*: for the manner in which Anacaona persuaded Bartholomew Columbus to eat it, and for the method of cooking it, see Peter Martyr (i. 5). For the reptiles of Española, see Oviedo (xii. 7, 8); for the insects, see Oviedo (xv). In various passages, Oviedo also comments on the degraded palates of the natives, but Peter Martyr (*loc. cit.*) declares that when once the Spaniards had overcome their repulsion at the smell of cooked *iguana*, they regarded it as the greatest delicacy in the world.

³ Alonso de Ojeda (cp. *infra*, p. 76, note 2) and Ginés de Gorbalan. The latter returned to Spain with the ships of Antonio de Torres (cp. *infra*, p. 76), and for

como sin fierro se pueden hacer. El mantenimiento suyo es pan hecho de raices de una yerba que es entre árbol é yerba, é el age, de que ya tengo dicho que es como nabos, que es muy buen mantenimiento: tienen por especia, por lo adobar, una especia que se llama *agi*, con la cual comen tambien el pescado, como aves cuando las pueden haber, que hay infinitas de muchas maneras. Tienen otrosí unos granos como avellanas, muy buenos de comer. comen cuantas eulebras é lagartos é arañas é cuantos gusanos se hallan por el suelo; ansi que me parece es mayor su bestialidad que de ninguna bestia del mundo. Despues de una vez haber determinado el Almirante de dejar el descubrir las minas fasta primero enviar los navíos que se habian de partir á Castilla, por la mucha enfermedad que habia seido en la gente, acordó de enviar dos cuadrillas con dos Capitanes, el uno á Cibao y el otro á Niti, donde está Caonobó, de que ya he dicho, las cuales fueron é vinieron el uno á veinte dias de Enero, é el otro á veinte é uno: el que fue á Cibao halló oro en tantas partes que no lo osa hombre decir, que de verdad en mas de cincuenta arroyos é rios hallaban oro, é fuera de los rios por tierra; de manera que en toda aquella provincia dice que do quiera que lo quieran buscar lo hallarán. Trajo muestra de muchas partes como en la arena de los rios é en las hontizuelas, que estan sobre tierra, creese que cabando, como sabemos hacer, se hallará en mayores pedazos, porque los indios no saben cabar ni tienen con que puedan cabar de un palmo arriba. El otro que fue á Niti trajo tambien nueva de mucho oro en tres ó cuatro partes; ansi mesmo trajo la muestra dello. Ansi que de cierto los Reyes nuestros Señores desde agora se pueden tener por los mas prósperos é mas ricos Príncipes del mundo, porque tal cosa hasta agora no se ha visto ni leido de ninguno

his services in the Indies and against the Moors was granted lands from the royal demesne in the district of Granada to the value of 200,000 maravedis, to him and his heirs in perpetuity (*Doc. Ind. (1ª serie)*, 30, pp. 310-12). For the expedition, see Las Casas (i. 89), Peter Martyr (i. 2), Syllacio (Thacher, ii, p. 259). Oviedo (ii. 12), says that little gold was found, and the disbelief of the Spaniards in the accuracy of the accounts given by Ojeda led Columbus to make his expedition to Cibao (Las Casas, i. 90-1).

or read of anyone in the world, since truly on the next voyage which the ships make they will be able to carry so great a quantity of gold, that whoever hears of it will be able to wonder. Here I think it will be well to stop my account. I believe that those who do not know me and who hear these things may find me prolix and a man who has exaggerated somewhat. But God is witness that I have not gone one iota beyond the bounds of truth.

En el mundo, porque verdaderamente á otro camino que los navíos vuelvan pueden llevar tanta cantidad de oro que se puedan maravillar cualesquiera que lo supieren. Aquí me parece será bien cesar el cuento: creo los que no me conocen que oyeren estas cosas, me ternán por prolijo é por hombre que ha alargado algo; pero Dios es testigo que yo no he traspasado una jota los términos de la verdad.

2. *Memorandum of Christopher Columbus, sent to Ferdinand and Isabella, by Antonio de Torres.*¹

THAT which you, Antonio de Torres, captain of the ship *Mariagalante*,² and alcaide of the city of Isabella,³ are to say and to ask on my behalf of the king and queen, our sovereigns, is the following.

Firstly: Having delivered the letters of credence which you bear from me for their highnesses, you shall kiss for me their royal feet and hands, and you shall commend me to their highnesses, as to the king and queen, my natural sovereigns,⁴ in whose service I desire that I may end my days, as you will be able to say more at length to their highnesses, according to that which you have seen and know of me.

Their highnesses receive this service to them.

Item: Although from the letters which I, and also father Fray Buil⁵ and the treasurer,⁶ write to their highnesses, they will be able to understand all that has been done here since our arrival, and that very minutely and extensively, yet you

¹ For the Memorandum generally, cp. *supra*, Introduction, p. cxlv *et seq.* Antonio de Torres was the brother of Juana de la Torre, the nurse of prince Juan (cp. *infra*, vol. II, p. 48, note 2). Having accompanied Columbus on his second voyage, he returned to Spain with twelve ships, sailing from Isabella, 2 Feb. 1494, and reaching Cádiz, 10 April. He returned to Española with four ships, bringing supplies, and again left for Spain, 24 Feb. 1495, reaching Cádiz, 7 April (cp. Las Casas, i. 89, 102; Navarrete, *Colección de los Viajes*, ii, pp. 115, 149, 154, and 158). He conveyed Juan Aguado to Española in 1495. In 1497 it was proposed to entrust to him the control of the affairs of the Indies in Spain, in place of Juan de Fonseca, but de Torres made conditions which proved to be unacceptable and Fonseca was therefore confirmed in his position (Las Casas, i. 126). De Torres commanded the fleet which brought Nicolas de Ovando to Española (Las Casas, ii. 3), and was drowned in the hurricane which destroyed that fleet as it was about to return to Spain in 1502 (Las Casas, ii. 5).

² Cp. *supra*, p. 22, note 3.

³ This is the first appearance of the name of the city in an official document.

⁴ This phrase suggests a wish on the part of Columbus to insist on his complete identification with Spain, in answer to the attacks which had been made upon him as an alien (cp. Las Casas, i. 92, and *infra*, p. 94).

⁵ Fray Buil (*al.* Boil, Boyl, Buyl, Bruil) was a Catalan, born at Tarragona. He entered the Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, and was high in the favour of the sovereigns, who relied on him to keep them informed of all that occurred (cp. Letter, 4 Aug. 1493: *Doc. Inéd.* (1^a serie), 30, pp. 180-1). Ulloa (*Xristo-*

2. MEMORIAL

Lo que vos Antonio de Torres, capitán de la nao Maria-galante, é alcayde de la çibdad Ysabela, avéys de dezir é suplicar de mi parte al rey é la reyna, nuestros señores, es lo syguiente.

Primeramente, dadas las cartas de crehencia que lleváys de mi para Sus Altezas, besaréys por mi sus reales pies é manos, y me encomendaréys en Sus Altesas, como á rey é reyna, mis señores naturales, en cuyo servicio yo deseo fencer mis días, como esto más largamente vos podréys dezir á Sus Altezas, segund lo que en mi vistes é supistes.

Sus Altezas se lo tienen en servicio.

Ytem, como quiera que por las cartas que á Sus Altezas escrivo, y aun el padre fray Buil y el thesorero, podrán comprehendre todo lo que acá después de nuestra llegada se fizó, y esto harto por menudo y estensamente, con todo,

Ferens Colom, p. 205) suggests that he was sent as a spy on Columbus. He was appointed apostolic vicar, and charged with the duty of superintending the conversion of the Indians, but he found himself to be unfitted for such work and asked to be recalled: the sovereigns urged him to persevere (*Doc. Inéd.* 30, pp. 304-5). He early came into conflict with Columbus, either because he advocated vigorous measures against Guacanagari (cp. *supra*, p. 59, note 2), or because he objected to the severity of the punishments inflicted by Columbus and the short rations on which he kept the Spaniards (cp. Las Casas, i. 92). Oviedo (ii. 13) says that Columbus punished Buil's hostility by cutting down his allowance of food. Buil returned to Spain in 1494, although he had been left as a member of the council to govern Isabella during the absence of Columbus (Las Casas, i. 94, 100). He was called upon by the sovereigns to state his case against Columbus when the latter returned to Spain in 1495 (Oviedo, *loc. cit.*). He became abbot of Cuxá and died in 1520. His character has been vigorously assailed (e.g. by Washington Irving, *Columbus* (ed. 1885), i. 382 ff.), but he has been vindicated by Fidel Fita y Colomer, who has devoted much industry to the study of all the documents relating to Buil (cp. his monographs in *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, vols. xix, xx; and *Fray Bernardo Boyl*, in *Boletín Histórico*, 1884).

⁶ Pedro de Villacorta (Las Casas, i. 82). He is mentioned in a letter from Columbus to his son, Diego Columbus (*Nuevos Autógrafos*, p. 11); this letter, which is dated 29 April, with no year given, is assigned by Thacher (iii. 129) to the year 1498, in which case Villacorta had then returned to Spain.

shall say on my behalf to their highnesses that it has pleased God to give me such grace for their service, that up to now I do not find less, nor has less been found, of anything that I have written and said and affirmed to their highnesses in past days. Rather by the grace of God, I hope that from what is done it will appear much more clearly still and that very soon. For in the matter of spices; on the shore of the sea alone, without having penetrated into the interior, such signs and evidence of them have been found, that it is reasonable to expect much better results.¹ And the same in the matter of the mines of gold. For, by two only who went to discover, each in a different direction, without their remaining there because the men were few, there have been found so many rivers, so filled with gold, that all of those who saw it and collected it, merely with their hands as specimens, came back so very delighted and say such great things about its abundance, that I feel diffidence in repeating what they say and in writing it to their highnesses. But as Gorbalan,² who was one of the discoverers, is going home, he will say what he saw. The other, however, who is called Ojeda,³ a client of the duke of Medina-celi, a very discreet young man and one of very great prudence, remains here, and without doubt and without any comparison, he discovered much more, according to the account which he brought back of the rivers, saying that in each one of them there is an amount which is incredible. For this their highnesses may give thanks to God, since He has been so favourable to them in all their affairs.

Their highnesses give great thanks to God, and they regard as a very signal service all that the admiral has done in this matter and is doing, for they appreciate that, under God, they are indebted to him for all which they have had and will have in this matter; and since concerning this, they are writing to him more at length, they refer him to their letter.

¹ Cp. *infra*, p. 69.

² Cp. *supra*, p. 70, note 2.

³ Alonso de Ojeda (or Hojeda) was born at Cuenca, c. 1470: was first cousin to his namesake, a Dominican and one of the first inquisitors, and was a client of Luis de la Cerda, duke of Medina-celi. He attracted the attention of Isabella by a feat of daring on the occasion of a visit which she paid to Seville (cp. Las Casas, i. 82), and was also a favourite of Fonseca (cp. Las Casas, i. 164). He

Diréys á Sus Altezas de mi parte que á Dios ha plazido darme tal gracia para en su servicio, que hasta aquí no hallo yo menos, ni se ha hallado, en cosa alguna, de lo que yo escriví y dixe y afirmé á Sus Altezas en los días pasados; antes, por gracia de Dios, espero que aun muy más claramente y muy presto por la obra parecerá, porque las cosas d'especería en solas las orillas de la mar, syn aver entrado dentro en la tierra, se halla tal rastro é prinçipios d'ella, que es razón que se esperen muy mejores fines; y esto mismo en las minas del oro, porque con solos dos que fueron á descubrir, cada uno por su parte, syn detenerse allá, porque heran poca gente, se han descubierto tantos ríos, tan poblados de oro, que qualquier de los que lo vieron é cogieron solamente con las manos por muestra, vinieron tan alegres, y disen tantas cosas de la abundancia d'ello, que yo tengo enpacho de las dezir y escrevir á Sus Altezas. pero, porque allá va Gorvalán, que fué uno de los descubridores, él dirá lo que vió, aunque acá queda otro, que llaman 'Hojeda', criado del duque de Medinaçeli, muy discretó moço y de muy grand recabdo, que syn dubda y aun syn comparación descubrió mucho más, segund el memorial de los ríos qu'él trajo, diziendo que en cada uno d'ellos ay cosa de non creer, por lo qual Sus Altezas pueden dar gracias á Dios, pues tan favorablemente se ha en todas sus cosas.

Sus Altezas dan muchas gracias á Dios por esto, y tienen en muy señalado servicio al almirante todo lo que en esto ha fecho y hase, porque conosçen que, después de Dios, á él son en cargo de todo lo que en esto han ovido y ovieren, y, porque çerca d'esto le escriven más largo, á su carta se remiten.

accompanied Columbus on his second voyage; relieved the fort of St. Thomas and captured Caonabo (cp. Las Casas, i. 89, 91-93). Having returned to Spain, he secured a licence to make discoveries, and made three voyages to the New World; on the third, he had secured a government on the Isthmus, but the expedition was disastrous (cp. Las Casas, ii. 52, 57-61). He eventually died in great poverty at Santo Domingo, probably in 1515 or 1516 (cp. Las Casas, ii. 61). He gave evidence in the action of Diego Columbus against the crown, 7 Dec. 1512, in support of the contention of the Fiscal that the discovery of the mainland was not due to Columbus (*Pleitos de Colón*, i, pp. 203-8). He is to be distinguished from the Alonso de Ojeda, 'a sinner of a man', who raided Cumana and who was killed by the Indians (Las Casas, iii. 146). (Cp. Pizarro y Orellana, *Varones Ilustres del Nuevo Mundo*, pp. 41-64.)

Item: You shall say to their highnesses that which I have already written to them, that I was very desirous to be able to send to them by this fleet a greater quantity of the gold which it is hoped may be collected here, if only the majority of our people here had not fallen suddenly ill.¹ This fleet, however, could not now be detained here longer, both on account of the great cost involved and because this season is suitable for going and such that those will be able to return who are to bring those things of which there is here great need. For, if they were to postpone their departure hence, those who have to come would not be able to come here until May. And besides that, if, with those who are well, who are to be found here, both on the sea and on land in the settlement, I were to wish to undertake to go to the mines or rivers, now, there would be many difficulties and even dangers. For to go from here twenty-three or twenty-five leagues, where there are inlets of the sea and rivers to cross,² and for so long a journey, and in order to stay there for the time which would be needed for collecting the gold, it would be essential to carry many supplies which could not be borne on our backs. There are here no beasts of burden which could serve for the purpose, and the roads and passes are not sufficiently prepared, although they have begun to make them so that they may be possible to traverse.³ And it would also be very inconvenient to leave the sick here in an open place and in huts, and with the provisions and supplies which there are in the land. For although these Indians have shown themselves, and do every day show themselves, to the discoverers as being very simple and without malice, yet, as every day they come here among our men, it does not appear that it would be well advised to run any risk and perhaps to lose these people and the supplies, which an Indian with a burning faggot could bring about, setting fire to the huts, for they come and go constantly night and day. On account of them, we have guards in the camp, while the settlement is unwalled and without defence.⁴

He did that well.

¹ Cp. *supra*, p. 66.

² For the rivers of Cibao, cp. Las Casas, *Apologética Historia*, c. 6. Among them

Ytem, diréys á Sus Altezas, como quier que ya se les escribe, que yo descava mucho en esta armada poderles enbiar mayor cantidad de oro, d'el que acá se espera poder cojer, sy la gente, que acá está çerca, la mayor parte súbitamente non cahiera doliente. pero, porque ya esta armada non se podía detener acá más, syquiera por la costa grande que haze, syquiera porqu'el tiempo es este propio para yr y poder bolver los que han de traer acá las cosas que aquí hasen mucha mengua, porque sy tardasen de yrse de aquí, non podrían bolverse para mayo los que han de bolver, y, allende d'esto, sy con los sanos que acá se hallan, asý en mar como en tierra, en la población, yo quisiera enprender de yr á las minas ó ríos agora, y avía muchas dificultades y aun peligros, porque de aquí á veynte y tres ó .xxiiii. leguas, en donde ay puertos y ríos para pasar, y para tan luengo camino, y para estar allá al tiempo que sería menester para cojer el oro, avía menester llevar muchos mantenimientos, los quales non podrían llevar á cuestras, ni ay bestias acá, que á esto pudiesen suplir, ni los caminos y pasos non están tan aparejados, como quier que se han començado á adobar, para que se podiesen pasar, y también era grande ynconveniente dexar acá los dolientes en lugar abierto y choças, y las provisiones y mantenimientos que están en tierra, que, como quier que estos Yndios se ayan mostrado á los descubridores y se muestran cada día muy symples y syn malicia, con todo, porque cada día vienen acá entre nosotros, non paresció que fuera buen consejo meter á riesgo y á ventura de perderse esta gente y los mantenimientos, lo que un Yndio con un tizón podría haser, poniendo fuego á las choças, porque, de noche y de día, syempre van y vienen, á causa d'ellos tenemos guardas en el campo, mientras la población está abierta y syn defensión.

Que lo hiso bien.

were the Yaqui, or Rio del Oro; a second Rio del Oro, either the Mao or the Nicayagua; the Buenicún or Rio Seco; the Cotteniquin, the Cibú, and the Rio Verde. Most of these were small streams, which cannot be identified. When he went to Cibao, Columbus seems to have proceeded along the coast and then to have struck inland across the Vega.

³ Cp. Las Casas, i. 90, 91.

⁴ The anxiety of Columbus that Isabella should be completed led him to force the Spaniards to work at the building and roused opposition to him (cp. Las Casas, i. 88).

Further: As we have seen that of those who went inland to explore, the majority have fallen ill after their return, and that some were even forced to turn back on the way, there was also ground for fearing that the same might happen to such of the healthy as were to be found, if they were to go now. And it followed that there were there two dangers; the one, that they might fall ill there, while engaged on the work itself, where there is not a house or any protection from that cacique whom they call Caonabo,¹ who is a man, according to all accounts, very evil and much more daring, and who, seeing us there, discouraged and ill, might be able to undertake something which he would not dare if we were well. And with this, another difficulty may be urged, that of bringing here the gold which we might collect, for either we should have to bring a little and go and come every day, and expose ourselves to the risk of illness, or it would have to be sent with some part of the people with the same danger of loss.

He has done well.

So that: You shall say to their highnesses that these are the reasons why the armada has not been kept back at present, and why no more gold than specimens has been sent to them. But, trusting in the mercy of God, Who in all and through all has guided us until now, this people will speedily be restored to health, as is already coming to pass, for the country only tries them for some space of time and after that they recover. And it is certain that if they had some fresh meat to restore their health more rapidly, they would all, with the help of God, be on their feet, and the majority even would by this time be already convalescent; however, they are regaining their health. With these few healthy who remain here, every day is employed in enclosing the settlement and putting it in some posture of defence and the supplies in a secure position.² This will be done in a few days, as there need be nothing but dry walls.³ For these Indians are not a people, unless they were to find us sleeping, to undertake anything, even if they had the thought. So they did to the others, who remained

¹ Cf. supra, p. 49 and note 4.

Otrosý, como avemos visto en los que fueron por tierra á descubrir, que los más cayeron dolientes, después de bueltos, y aun algunos se ovieron de bolver del camino, hera también razón de temer que otrotal contesçiese á los que agora yrían d'estos sanos, que se allan, y seguirse hían dos peligros de allí, el uno, de adoleser allá en la misma obra, do non ay casa ni reparo alguno, de aquel caçique que llaman 'Caonabó', que es onbre, segund relación de todos, muy malo y muy más atrevido, el qual, viéndonos allá asý desbaratados y dolientes, podría emprender lo que non osaría, sy fuésemos sanos. y con esto mismo se allega otra dificultad, de traer acá lo que llegásenos de oro, porque, ó avíamos de traer poco, y yr y venir cada día, y meterse en el riesgo de las dolencias, ó se avía de enbiar con alguna parte de la gente, con el mismo peligro de perderlo.

Que lo hiso bien.

Asý que diréys á Sus Altesas que estas son las cabsas porque de presente non se ha detenido el armada, ni se les enbía oro más de las muestras. pero, confiando en la misericordia de Dios, que en todo y por todo nos ha guiado hasta aquí, esta gente convalesçerá presto, como ya lo hasen, porque solamente les prueva la tierra de algunas çeçiones, y luego se levantan; y es çierto que sy tuviesen algunas carnes frescas para convalesçer, muy presto serían todos en pie, con ayuda de Dios, é aun los más estarían ya convalesçidos en este tiempo, enpero que ellos convalesçen. con estos pocos sanos, que acá quedan, cada día se entiende en çerrar la población y meterla en alguna defensa, y los mantenimientos en seguro, que será fecho en breves días, porque no ha de ser syno albarradas; que non son gente los Yndios, que, sy dormiendo no nos fallasen, para enprender cosa ninguna, aunque la toviesen pensada; que asý hizieron á los otros que acá quedaron por su mal recabdo, los quales, por pocos que

their depredations, as well as from the natives and the weather (cp. Las Casas, i. 92). He was also carrying out the explicit orders of the sovereigns [cp. Navarrete, ii. 70].

² *Albarradas*: an Arabic word, meaning stone walls put up without mortar (from *al* and *parata*).

here, owing to their lack of care, for few as they were and for all the occasions which they gave to the Indians to have and to do that which they did do, they would never have dared to attempt to injure them if they had seen that they were watchful.¹ And when this work has been done, I will undertake to go to the said rivers,² either taking the route there from here and seeking the best means possible, or by sea, rounding the island to that part from which it is said that it cannot be more than six or seven leagues to the said rivers. I will act in such a way that the gold may be able to be collected in safety and placed in security in some fort or tower which may be immediately made there, to hold it collected for the time when the two caravels go there, so that, immediately at the first time which may be fit for making this journey, it may be sent with good security.

This is well and so he should do.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses, as has been said, that the cause of the illness, so general among all, is the change of water and air, for we see that it spreads to all one after another, and few are in danger. It follows that, under God, the preservation of health depends upon this people being provided with the food to which they are accustomed in Spain, for none of them, or others who may newly arrive, can serve their highnesses unless they are in health. And this provision should continue until here a supply can be secured from that which is here sown and planted, I mean from wheat and barley and grapes, towards which little has been done this year, since it was not possible earlier to select a site for a settlement.³ And directly after it was selected, those few labourers who were here fell ill, and even if they had been well, they had so few beasts and those so lean and weak, that it is little that they would have been able to do. Nevertheless, they have sown something, mainly in order to test the soil, which appears to be very wonderful, so that from this some relief in our necessities may be expected. We are very sure, as what has been done shows, that in this country wheat as

¹ Columbus would here seem to be defending himself against the charge that he had not taken sufficient precautions to ensure the safety of those whom he

fuesen y por mayores ocasiones que dieran á los Yndios de aver é de hazer lo que hizieron, nunca ellos osaran enprender de dañarlos, sy los vieran á buen recabdo. y, esto fecho, luego se entenderá en yr á los dichos ríos, ó desde aquí tomado el camino, y buscando los mejores expedientes que se puedan, ó por la mar, rodeando la ysla fasta aquella parte, de donde se dize que non deve aver más de seys ó syete leguas hasta los dichos ríos, por forma que con seguridad se pueda cojer el oro y ponerlo en recabdo de alguna fortaleza ó torre, que allí se haga luego, para tenerlo cogido al tiempo que las dos caravelas bolverán acá, é para que luego con el primer tiempo que sea para navegar este camino, se envíe á buen recabdo.

Que está bien y así lo deve haser.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas, como dicho es, que las cabsas de la dolencia tan general de todos es de mudamiento de aguas y ayres, porque vemos que á todos arreo se estiende, y peligran pocos. por consyguiente, la conservación de la sanidad, después de Dios, está que esta gente sea proveýda de los mantenimientos, que en España acostunbravan, porque d'ellos, ni de otros que viniesen de nuevo, Sus Altezas se podrían servir, sy no están sanos. y esta provisyón ha de durar hasta que acá se aya fecho cimiento de lo que acá se sembrare y plantare, digo de trigos y cevadas y viñas, de lo qual para este año se ha fecho poco, porque no se pudo de antes tomar asyento, y liego que se tomó, adolescieron aquellos poquitos labradores, que acá estaban; los quales, aunque estovieran sanos, tenían tan pocas bestias, y tan magras y flacas, que poco es lo que podieran hazer. con todo, alguna cosa han senbrado, mas para provar la tierra, que paresçe muy maravillosa, para que de allí se puede esperar remedio alguno en nuestras necesidades. somos bien çiertos, como la obra lo muestra, que en esta tierra asý el trigo, como el vino, naçerá muy bien ;

had left at La Navidad and that he had trusted too much to the apparent friendliness of the natives.

² The rivers were the Yaqui, or Rio del Oro, and the Neiba.

³ Cp. *supra*, p. 60 *et seq.*, and Las Casas (i. 88). Cuneo (*loc. cit.*) seems to have underestimated the length of time which was occupied in finding a suitable place for a settlement: his account differs in some material respects from that given by Las Casas and Chanca.

well as vines will grow very well. But it is necessary to wait for the fruit, and if it be such as the rapid growing of the wheat, and of some few vines which have been planted, suggests, it is certain that here there will be no need of Andalusia or of Sicily, and the same applies to sugar canes, judging from the way in which some few that have been planted have taken root.¹ For it is certain that the beauty of the land of these islands, as well of the mountains and sierras and rivers, as of the plains, where there are broad rivers, is such to behold that no other land on which the sun shines can be better to see or more lovely.

Since the land is of such character, it should be arranged that as much as possible be sown with all things, and Don Juan de Fonseca² is instructed to send at once all that may be needed for this purpose.

Item: You shall say that, on account of much of the wine of that which the fleet carried having run away on this voyage, and this, as the majority say, being the fault of the bad work which the coopers did in Seville, the greatest need which we now have, or which we expect to have for the present, is of wine. And though we have enough biscuit, as well as corn, for some while, yet it is necessary that some reasonable amount should also be sent, for the voyage is long and provision cannot be made every day, and likewise some salt meat, I mean bacon, and other salt flesh, which should be better than that which we have brought on this voyage.³

¹ Columbus had taken supplies of various seeds with him (cp. Las Casas, i. 83; Peter Martyr, i. 1). Wheat, sown in January, was cut in March; fruit stones, if sown, sprouted in seven days; sugar canes grew with equal rapidity (Ferdinand Columbus, c. 53).

² Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, son of Dr. Juan Alonso de Fonseca, by Beatriz Rodriguez. He was a nephew of Alonso de Fonseca, archbishop of Seville, while his brothers were Alonso de Fonseca, señor de Coca y Alaejos, and Antonio de Fonseca, contador mayor of Castile. He was a pupil of Antonio de Lebrija, who dedicated to him his *Vafre dictis Philosophorum carminibus Latinis reddita*. Fonseca became archdeacon of Seville and gained the favour of Ferdinand and Isabella, who commissioned him to escort the widowed Margaret of Austria through France (1499), when she returned to her father after the death of prince Juan. Fonseca was successively bishop of Badajoz, Córdoba, Palencia, and Burgos, and was created conde de Pernia. He was entrusted with the duty of directing the preparations for the second voyage of Columbus, and from that time exercised a preponderating influence on the affairs of the Indies; he was the

pero, háse de esperar el fruto, el qual, sy tal será como muestra la presteza del nasçer del trigo é de algunos poquitos de sarmientos, que se pusyeron es cierto que non fará mengua el Andalucía ni Seçilia aquí, ni en las cañas de açucar segund unas poquitas, que se pusyeron, han prendido. porqu'es cierto que la fermosura de la tierra d'estas yslas, asý de montes é syerras y aguas, como de vegas, donde ay ríos cabdales, es tal la vista, que ninguna otra tierra que sol escaliente puede ser mejor, al paresçer, ni tan fermosa.

Pues la tierra es tal, que deve procurar que se sienbre lo más que ser pudiere de todas cosas, y á don Juan de Fonseca se escribe que enbïe de contino todo lo que fuere menester para esto.

Ytem, dirés que á cabsa de averse derramado mucho vino en este camino d'el que la flota traýa, y esto, segund disen los más, á culpa de la mala obra que los toneleros hizieron en Sevylla, la mayor mengua que agora tenemos aquí, ó esperamos para esto tener, es de vinos ; y, como quier que tengamos para más tiempo asý vizcocho como trigo, con todo, es neçesario que también se enbïe alguna cantidad razonable, porqu'el camino es luengo, é cada día no se puede proveer, é asymismo algunas carnes, digo toçinos y otra çeçina, que sea mejor que la que avemos traýdo este camino. de carneros

first president of the Council of the Indies, which, however, was not really organized during his lifetime. He was the patron of Alonso de Ojeda, of Magellan, and of other early explorers, but was very hostile to Cortés. Peter Martyr [i. 1 and elsewhere] and Bernaldez (c. 118) speak in the highest terms of his work in connexion with Indian affairs, but Las Casas, who had quarrelled with him on the question of the treatment of the Indians, accuses him of inveterate hostility towards Columbus (cp. Las Casas, i. 167 ; iii. 130 *et seq.*). He declares that 'the lord bishop knew far more about fitting out fleets than about saying mass in an episcopal manner', and that he engaged in forms of employment 'better suited to a Biscayan than a bishop' (Las Casas, i. 78). The unfavourable verdict of Las Casas has been generally accepted by later writers (e.g. Washington Irving, i. 281 ; iii. 420, and Appendix 34). There would seem to be little direct evidence that Fonseca had any particular antipathy to Columbus. His capacity would seem to be beyond question. He died in 1524.

³ Supplies of provisions for the fleet on the second voyage were drawn partly from royal stores at Seville and Cádiz, but as the supplies there were inadequate, additional amounts were drawn from elsewhere: Jacinto Berardi was accorded a contract for the supply of biscuit (cp. *Doc. Inéd.* (1^a serie), 38, pp. 140-2 ; 30, pp. 108-9, 159-60, 161). There does not appear to be any document dealing directly with the supply of wine, and it is not possible to fix the responsibility for the fraud, if fraud there were.

As to livestock, sheep and lambs above all, more females than males, and some calves and young heifers are necessary, so that they should come always in every caravel which may be sent here, and some he- and she-asses, and mares for labour and tillage, for there are here none of those animals which can be put to use or which are of value.¹ And since I fear that their highnesses may not be found in Seville, and that their officials or ministers, without their express command, may not make provision for that which now, in this next voyage, it is necessary should come, and since in consulting and answering the season for the departure of the ships, as it is necessary that they should be here in May in any case, will pass, you shall say to their highnesses how I have already given you charge and command that, pledging the gold which you are taking home, or placing it in the power of some merchant in Seville, he will defray and supply the money which may be needed to load two caravels with wine and corn and with the other things of which you carry a memorandum. And this merchant shall carry or send the said gold to their highnesses that they may see it, receive it and cause to be paid from it that which has been expended and employed for the despatch and lading of the said two caravels, which are to console and revive this people who remain here. It is well that everything should be done that is possible in order that they may come here in any case in the month of May, so that the people, before the beginning of summer, may see and have some refreshment from these things, especially the sick. Of these things we have already great need, such as of raisins, sugar, almonds, honey and rice, of which a great quantity should have come and very little arrived, and that which did come has been expended and consumed, as well as the greater part of the medicines, which we brought from there, owing to the number of the many sick. Of these things, as has been said, both for the healthy and for the sick, you carry memoranda, signed by my hand. These things, completely if the money be sufficient, or at least the most necessary, shall be despatched immediately, so that they may be able to be

¹ A certain amount of livestock was taken by Columbus on his second voyage (cp. Ferdinand Columbus, c. 45; Peter Martyr, i. 1). More was shipped at

bivos, y aun antes corderos y cordericas, más fembras que machos, y algunos bezerros y bezerras pequeños, son menester que cada vez venga en qualquier caravela, que acá se enbiare, y algunas asnas y asnos, y yeguas, para trabajo y symiente; que acá ninguna d'estas animalias ay, de que onbre se pueda ayudar ni valer. y porque reçelo que Sus Altezas no se fallarán en Sevilla, ni los oficiales ó ministros suyos, syn espreso mandamiento, non proveerán en lo que agora con este primero camino es necesario que venga, porque en la consulta y en la respuesta se pasaría la sazón del partir los navíos, que acá por todo mayo es necesario que sean, dirés á Sus Altezas como yo vos dí cargo y mandé que del oro, que allá lleváys, enpeñándolo ó poniéndolo en poder de algund mercader en Sevilla, el qual distraya y ponga los maravedís que serán menester para cargar dos caravelas de vino, y de trigo, y de las otras cosas que lleváys por memorial. el qual mercader lleve ó enbíe el dicho oro para Sus Altezas, que le vean, rescíban, é hagan pagar lo que oviere distraýdo é puesto para el despacho y cargazón de las dichas dos caravelas, las quales, por consolar y esforçar esta gente, que acá queda, cumple que hagan más de poder de ser acá bueltas por todo el mes de mayo; porque la gente, antes de entrar en el verano, vean é tengan algún refrescamiento d'estas cosas, en espeçial para las dolencias, de las quales cosas acá ya tenemos gran mengua, como son pasas, açúcar, almendras, miel é arroz, que deviera venir en grand cantidad, y vino muy poca, é aquello que vino es ya consumido é gastado, y aun la mayor parte de las medeçinas, que de allá troxieron, por la muchedumbre de los muchos dolientes; de las quales cosas, como dicho es, vos lleváys memoriales, asý para sanos como para dolientes, firmados de mi mano. los quales complidamente, sy el dinero bastare, ó á lo menos lo que más necesario sea para agora,

Gomera (Las Casas, i. 83), including eight pigs, 'from whom all the swine of the Indies, which are innumerable, are descended'. For further provision in this matter, cp. *Cédula*, 9 April 1495 (Navarrete, ii. 162-4), when six mares, four male and two female asses, four calves and two heifers, a hundred head of small livestock, two hundred hens, eighty sows and twenty hogs, live rabbits, 'as many as it seems right to send', some sheep and cows, as well as 'a priest of conscience and learning', were to be dispatched to Española. If these swine were actually sent, the statement of Las Casas on the pedigree of the swine of the Indies would seem to be inaccurate.

brought at once by the said two ships. And as to what remains, you shall procure from their highnesses that it shall come with other ships as speedily as may be possible.

Their highnesses will send orders to Don Juan de Fonseca that he shall immediately make inquiry concerning those who committed this fraud in the matter of the casks, and from their own goods there shall be taken enough to cover all the loss of the wine which occurred, with the costs; and in the matter of the sugar canes, that those which are sent shall be good, and as to the other things which he mentions here, that they be provided forthwith.¹

It is already provided with the two caravels which go first.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses that, owing to the fact that there is here no interpreter,² by means of whom it is possible to give to these people understanding of our holy Faith, as their highnesses desire and also those of us who are here, although every possible effort has been made, there are now sent with these ships some of the cannibals, men and women and boys and girls. These their highnesses can order to be placed in charge of persons so that they may be able better to learn the language, employing them in forms of service, and ordering that gradually greater care be given to them than to other slaves, so that some may learn from others. If they do not speak to each other or see each other until much later, they will learn more quickly there than here, and they will be better interpreters, although here there has been no failure to do what could be done. It is the truth that, as among these people those of one island have little intercourse with those of another,³ in languages there is some difference between them, according to whether they are nearer to or farther from each other. And since of all the islands, those of the cannibals are much the largest and much more fully populated, it is thought here that to take some of the men and women and to send them home to Castile would not be anything but well, for they may one day be led to abandon that inhuman custom which they have of eating men, and there in Castile, learning the language, they will much more readily receive baptism and secure the welfare of their souls. Further,

¹ In a letter from the sovereigns, 4 July 1494, Fonseca is instructed to send

despacharés, para que lo puedan luego traer los dichos dos navíos; y lo que quedare procurarés con Sus Altezas que con otros navíos venga lo más presto que ser pudiere.

Sus Altezas enbiaron á mandar á don Juan de Fonseca que luego aya ynformación de los que hisieron ese engaño en los toneles, y de sus bienes haga que se cobre todo el daño que vino en el vino, con las costas; y en lo de las çeçinas vea como las que se enbiaren sean buenas, y en las otras cosas que aquí dise, que las provea luego.

Ya se proveyó con las dos caravelas que fueron primero.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altesas que á cabsa que acá no ay lengua, por medio de la qual á esta gente se pueda dar á entender nuestra sancta fee, como Sus Altezas desean y aun los que acá estamos, como quier que se trabajará quanto pudieren, se enbían de presente con estos navíos asý de los Caníbales, hombres y mugeres, y niños y niñas, los quales Sus Altezas pueden mandar poner en poder de personas, con quien puedan mejor aprender la lengua, exerçitándolos en cosas de serviçio, y poco á poco mandando poner en ellos algún más cuidado que en otros esclavos, para que deprendan unos de otros, que non se hablen ni se vean syno muy tarde, que más presto deprenderán allá que non acá, y serán mejores yntérpetres, como quier que acá no se dexará de haser lo que se pueda. es verdad que como esta gente plática poco los de la una ysla con los de la otra, en las lenguas ay alguna diferençia entre ellos, segund como están más cerca ó más leños, y porque entre las otras yslas las de los Caníbales son mucho grandes y mucho bien pobladas, paresçerá acá que tomar d'ellos y d'ellas, y enbiarlos allá á Castilla, no será syno bien; porque quitarse ýan una vez de aquella ynhumana costunbre, que tienen, de comer hombres, y allá en Castilla, entendiendo la lengua, muy más presto resçibirian el baptismo, y farían el provecho de sus ánimas. aun entre estos pueblos, que non son de esas costum-

four caravels at once; they were to carry various things, of which a list is given, for the personal use of Columbus (Navarrete, ii. 149-52).

² Fray Buil complained that his ignorance of the language hampered the work of conversion (cp. *Doc. Inéd. (1ª serie)*, 30, pp. 304-5).

³ Cp. *supra*, p. 12, and note 1.

among those peoples who have not these habits, great credit will be gained by us when they see that we take and make captive those men, from whom they are accustomed to suffer injury, and of whom they go in such fear that they are terrified at their very name. Assure their highnesses that here, in this land, our arrival and the sight of the fleet, so under control and beautiful, has given us very great authority for the present and very great security for our affairs in the future. For all the people of this great island, and of the other islands, when they see the good treatment which is meted out to well-doers and the punishment which is inflicted upon those who do evil, will quickly come to obedience so that it will be possible to command them as vassals of their highnesses. And as already here, wherever a man of them is to be found, they not only do willingly all that they are wished to do, but of their own accord set themselves to everything which they understand may please us, their highnesses may also be certain that on that side equally, among Christian princes, the coming of this fleet has given them great reputation in many respects, both now and hereafter, which their highnesses will be better able to understand and know than I have power to say.

Let him be informed of that which has occurred in the case of the cannibals who came here.¹

That is very well, and so it should be done, but let him endeavour, as it may be possible, that they there be converted to our holy Faith, and so let him endeavour in those islands where he may be.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses that the welfare of the souls of the said cannibals, and also of those here, has induced the idea that the more that may be sent over, the better it will be, and in this their highnesses may be served in the following way. That, having seen how necessary cattle and beasts of burden are here, for the support of the people who have to be here, and indeed for all these islands, their highnesses might give licence and a permit for a sufficient number of caravels to come here every year and to carry the

bres, se ganaría grand crédito por nosotros, viendo que aquellos prendiésemos y cativásemos, de quien ellos suelen rescibir daños, y tienen tamaño miedo, que del nombre solo se espantan; çertificando á Sus Altezas que la venida é vista d'esta flota acá en esta tierra, asý junta y fermosa, ha dado muy grande abtoridad á esto, y muy grand seguridad para las cosas venideras, para que toda esta gente d'esta tan grande ysla y de las otras, viendo el buen tratamiento, que á los buenos se hará y el castigo que á los malos se dará, verná á obediencia prestamente, para poderlos mandar como vasallos de Sus Altezas, como quier que ellos agora, donde quier que onbre se halle, non solo hazen de grado lo que hombre quiere que fagan, mas ellos de su voluntad se ponen á todo lo que entienden que nos puede plazer. y también pueden ser çiertos Sus Altezas que non menos allá entre los christianos príncipes aver dado gran reputación la venida d'esta armada, por muchos respectos, asý presentes como venideros, los quales Sus Altesas podrán mejor pensar y entender, que non sabría dezir.

Desirle éys lo que acá ha uvido de lo de los Caníbales, que acá vinieron.

Que está muy bien, y así lo deve haser; pero que procure allá como, sy ser pudiere, se redugan á nuestra santa fe católica, y asimismo lo procure con los de las yslas donde está.

Ytem, diréis á Sus Altezas qu'el provecho de las almas de los dichos Caníbales, y aun d'estos de acá, ha traýdo en pensamiento que quantos más allá se llevasen sería mejor, y en ellos podrían Sus Altezas ser servidos d'esta manera: que visto quanto son acá menester los ganados y bestias de trabajo para el sostenimiento de la gente que acá ha de estar y bien de todas estas yslas, Sus Altesas podrán dar liçençia é permiso á un número de caravelas suficiente, que vengán acá cada año, y trayan de los dichos ganados, y otros mantenimientos y cosas, para poblar el campo, y aprovechar la tierra; y esto en precios razonables, á sus costas de los que las truxieren; las quales cosas se les podrían pagar en esclavos d'estos Caní-

¹ The cannibals were distributed as slaves.

of the country and the development of the land, and this at reasonable prices at the cost of those who transport them. Payment for these things could be made to them in slaves, from among these cannibals, a people very savage and suitable for the purpose, and well made and of very good intelligence. We believe that they, having abandoned that inhumanity, will be better than any other slaves, and their inhumanity they will immediately lose when they are out of their own land. And of these they will be able to take many with the oared *fustas* which it is proposed to build here. It is, however, to be presupposed that each one of the caravels which come from their highnesses will have on board a reliable person, who will prevent the said caravels from stopping at any other place or island except here, where the lading and unlading of all the merchandise must be. And further, on these slaves which they carry, their highnesses could levy a duty there. And on this matter you shall bring or send an answer, in order that here the preparations which are necessary may be made with more confidence, if it seems well to their highnesses.

As to this, the matter has been postponed for the present, until another voyage has been made from there, and let the admiral write that which occurs to him concerning this matter.¹

Item: You shall also say to their highnesses that it is more profitable, and less cost, to freight ships as the merchants of Flanders do by the tonnage than in another way. Therefore I give it in charge to you to freight in this manner the two caravels which you are to despatch at once. And so it should be done in the case of the other vessels which their highnesses despatch, if they approve of this method. But I do not mean to say this in the case of the vessels which are to come with their licence for the merchandise of slaves.

Their highnesses command Don Juan de Fonseca that in the freighting of the caravels, he is to employ this method if it be possible.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses that, in order to avoid some greater expense, I have bought these caravels, of

bales, gente tan fiera, y dispuesta, y bien proporcionada, y de muy buen entendimiento; los quales, quitados de aquella ynhumanidad, creemos que serán mejores que otros ningunos esclavos; la qual luego perderán que sean fuera de su tierra, y d'estos podrán aver muchos con las fustas de remos, que acá se entienden de haser, fecho enpero presupuesto que cada una de las caravelas que viniesen de Sus Altezas pusyessen una persona fiable, la qual defendiese las dichas caravelas, que no descendiesen á ninguna otra parte ni ysla salvo aquí, donde ha de estar la carga y descarga de toda la mercadería; y aun d'estos esclavos que se llevaren á Sus Altezas podrían aver sus derechos allá, y d'esto traeréis ó enbiaréis respuesta, porque acá se hagan los aparejos que son menester con más confiança, sy á Sus Altezas paresçiere bien.

En esto se ha suspendido por agora, hasta que venga otro camino de allá, y escriba el almirante lo que en esto le paresçe.

Ytem, también diréys á Sus Altezas que más provechoso es y menos costa fletar los navíos, como los fletan los mercaderes para Flandes, por toneladas, que non de otra manera, por ende que yo vos dí cargo de fletar á este respecto las dos caravelas que avéys luego de enbiar, y así se podrá hazer de todas las otras que Sus Altezas enbiaren, sy de aquella forma se ternán por servidos. pero no entiendo dezir esto de las que han de venir con su licencia por la mercadería de los esclavos.

Sus Altezas mandan á don Juan de Fonseca que en el fletar de las caravelas tengan esta forma, sy ser pudiere.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas que á cabsa de escusar alguna más costa, yo merqué estas caravelas que lleváys por memorial, para retenerlas acá con estas dos naos, conviene á saber la Gallega y esa otra capitana, de la qual merqué, por semejante,

¹ Ferdinand and Isabella did not accept this suggestion of Columbus, although he afterwards elaborated it considerably. The fact that, in anticipation of royal approval, he sent some slaves to Spain was perhaps one of the causes of his eventual removal of his government of Española (cp. Las Casas, i. 106, 122, 151).

which you carry a memorandum, in order to retain them here with these two ships, that is to say, *la Gallega*, and the other, the flagship.¹ And in her, in the same way, I have bought a three-eighths share from her master, for the price which appears in the memorandum of these documents, which you carry, signed by my hand. And these ships will not only give authority and great security to the people who have to be on shore and to treat with the Indians for the collection of gold, but further they will be a protection against any kind of danger which might be experienced from a strange people. Further the caravels are needed for the discovery of *Tierra Firme* and other islands which lie between here and there. And you shall beg their highnesses that they will command the money which these ships have cost to be paid at the times at which it has been promised, for without doubt they will fully make good the expense, as I believe and hope in the mercy of God.

The admiral has done well, and you shall tell him that here payment has been made to him who sold the ship, and that they have commanded Don Juan de Fonseca that the cost of the caravels, which the admiral has bought, be paid.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses, and pray them on my behalf in the most humble manner possible, that it may please them to consider carefully that which they will see more at length in the letters and other writings, touching the peace and safety and concord of those who are here. And that their highnesses will select for employment in their service such persons, that there be no suspicion of them and that they consider rather the purpose for which they have been sent than their personal interests. And on this point, as you have seen and know all these matters, you shall speak and tell their highnesses the truth of all affairs as you understand them. And you shall see that the decision which their highnesses shall command to be taken in this matter shall come with the first ships, if it be possible, in order that there may not be scandals in a matter which so nearly concerns the service of their highnesses.²

¹ Cp. *supra*, p. 22, note 3. The flagship was *Santa María la Galante*.

del maestre d'ella los tres ochavos, por el presçio que en el dicho memorial d'estas copias lleváys firmado de mi mano. los quales navíos non solo darán abtoridad y grand seguridad á la gente, que ha de estar dentro, y conversar con los Yndios para coger el oro, mas aun para otra qualquier cosa de peligro que de gente estraña pudiese acontesçer; allende que las caravelas son necesarias para el descubrir de la tierra firme y otras yslas que entre aquí é allá están. y suplicarés á Sus Altezas que los maravedís que estos navíos cuestan manden pagar en los tiempos que se les ha prometido, porque syn dubda ellos ganarán bien su costa, segund yo creo y espero en la misericordia de Dios.

El almirante lo hizo bien, y desirle éys como acá se pagó al que vendió la nao, y mandaron á don Juan de Fonseca que pague lo de las caravelas qu'el almirante compró.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas y suplicarés de mi parte, quanto más húmilmente pueda, que les plega mucho mirar en lo que por las cartas y otras escripturas verán más largamente tocante á la paz é sosiego é concordia de los que acá están, y que para las cosas del servicio de Sus Altezas escojan tales personas que non se tenga reçelo d'ellas, y que miren más á lo por que se enbían, que non á sus propios yntereses; y en esto, pues que todas las cosas vistes é supistes, hablarés é diréis á Sus Altezas la verdad de todas las cosas como la comprehendistes, y que la provisyón de Sus Altezas, que sobre ello mandaren faser, venga con los primeros navíos, sy posible fuere, á fin que acá no se hagan escándalos en cosa que tanto va en el servicio de Sus Altezas.

² The allusion is to that growing hostility to Columbus at Isabella which was illustrated by the case of Firmin Zedo (Bernáldez, c. 120). It seems to be clear that the contador, Bernal de Pisa, had already quarrelled with Columbus, although his plot did not come to a head until a later date: in their letter, acknowledging the receipt of this Memorandum, the sovereigns instruct Columbus to send Bernal de Pisa home and to appoint a successor to him, with the approval of Fray Buil (Letter, 13 April 1494: Navarrete, ii. 113-16). Las Casas (i. 92) finds in the opposition to Columbus a judgement of God on the Admiral.

Their highnesses are well informed concerning this, and for all provision will be made as is fitting.

Item: You shall tell their highnesses of the situation of this city and the beauty of the surrounding district, as you have seen and know it, and how I have made you alcaide of it, in virtue of the powers which I hold from their highnesses for this, and that I pray them humbly that as some part recompense for your services, they will receive the said appointment favourably, as I hope from their highnesses.

It pleases their highnesses that you shall be alcaide.

Item: As Mosen Pedro Margarite,¹ a servant of their highnesses, has done good service, and I hope that he will so do in the future in the matters which may be entrusted to him, I have had pleasure at his remaining here, and also concerning Gaspar and Beltrán,² as being known servants of their highnesses, to have them to employ in confidential matters. You shall pray their highnesses that they will especially provide for the said Mosen Pedro, who is married and has children, some appointment in the order of Santiago, of which he wears the habit, in order that his wife and children may have wherewith to live. Likewise you shall give account of Juan Aguado,³ servant of their highnesses, how well and diligently he has served in all that has been entrusted to him, and so I supplicate their highnesses for him and for the above-mentioned, that they will advance and reward them.

¹ Pedro Margarite (more accurately, Margarit) was a Catalan of noble family, son of Bernardo Margarit. He became a member of the royal household and a knight of the order of Santiago; was agnail of the Inquisition in the diocese of Zaragoza (1478). Accompanied Columbus on his second voyage (Las Casas, i. 82); was left in command of the fort of St. Thomas in Cibao and was there besieged by Caonabo, being relieved by Ojeda (Las Casas, i. 91, 92, 93; Oviedo, ii. 13). When Columbus left Española on his voyage of discovery, Margarit was given command of a force with which he was to traverse and subdue the island, and to effect the capture of Caonabo (Las Casas, i. 94; and *Instructions to Margarite*, *Rac. Col.* I, i. 284-88). He did not carry out these instructions, quarrelled with the council left by Columbus to govern Isabella, threw up his command and returned to Spain with Fray Buil (cp. Las Casas, i. 100; Peter Martyr, i. 4; Oviedo, ii. 14). The reason for his action has not been elucidated; the suggestion that he was the victim of his excesses (cp. Washington Irving, ii. 16 ff. and Asensio

Sus Altezas están bien ynformados d'esto, y en todo se proveerá como conviene.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas el asyento d'esta cibdad é la fermosura de la provincia al derredor, como lo vistes y comprehendistes, y como yo vos hize alcayde d'ella, por los poderes que de Sus Altesas tengo para ello, á las quales omillmente suplico que en alguna parte de satisfacción de vuestros servicios tengan por bien la dicha provisión, como de Sus Altesas yo espero.

A Sus Altezas plase que vos seáis alcayde.

Ytem, porque mosén Pedro Margarite, criado de Sus Altezas, ha bien servido, y espero que asý lo hará adelante en las cosas que le fueren encomendadas, he avido plaser de su quedada aquí, y también de Gáspar, y de Beltrán, por ser coñoscidos criados de Sus Altezas, para los poner en cosas de confianza. suplicarés á Sus Altezas, que especial al dicho mosén Pedro, que es casado y tiene hijos, le provean de alguna encomienda en la horden de Santiago, de la qual él tiene el hábito, porque su muger é hijos tengan en que bivar. asy mismo harés relación de Juan Aguado, criado de Sus Altesas, quan bien é deligentemente ha servido en todo lo que le ha sydo mandado, que suplico á Sus Altesas á él é á los sobredichos los ayan por encomendados é por presentes.

y Toledo, *Cristóbal Colón*, i. 273) rests only on an indefinite statement in Oviedo (*loc. cit.*), nor is there any evidence for the suggestion of Ulloa (*Xristo-Ferens Colom*, p. 195) that Margarit, like Buil, had been sent to spy upon Columbus. On his return to Spain, Margarit vigorously attacked the conduct of Columbus in Española (cp. Las Casas, i. 107; Oviedo, *loc. cit.*). Margarit was married to María de Carrillo. He is not to be confused with the 'converso' of the same name. (Cp. Serrano y Sanz, *Orígenes de la Dominación Española en América*, p. 132 *et seq.*)

² Nothing appears to be known of these two men.

³ Juan Aguado was a member of the household of Isabella, by whom he was specially recommended to Columbus (Letter, 30 June 1493: Navarrete, ii. 77). He accompanied Columbus on his second voyage, but seems to have returned to Spain with Antonio de Torres in 1494. In 1495, he was sent to Española to investigate the charges brought against Columbus (Letter, 12 April 1495: Navarrete, ii. 169, and Letter, 19 April 1495, *Doc. Inéd.* (1ª serie), 30, p. 347; cp. *Nuevos Autografos*, pp. 25, 29). On reaching the island, he seems to have shown extreme hostility towards Columbus and to have behaved very intemperately. As a result of his mission Columbus decided to return to Spain, where the report of Aguado was rejected (Las Casas, i. 107-9, 112).

Their highnesses command to grant to Mosen Pedro thirty thousand maravedis every year, and to Gaspar and Beltran every year fifteen thousand maravedis, from to-day, 15 August 1494, henceforth, and so the admiral shall cause them to be paid in respect of that which has to be paid there, and Don Juan de Fonseca in respect of that which has to be paid here; and as to the matter of Juan Aguado, their highnesses will have it in mind.

Item: You shall tell their highnesses of the work imposed upon doctor Chanca owing to there being so many sick and further from the scarcity of supplies, and that despite all this he still shows the greatest diligence and charity in all that concerns his duty. And since their highnesses left to me the question of the salary which should be given to him here, although it is certain that, being here, he does not take and cannot receive anything from anyone, or earn through his profession that which he earned in Castile, or that which he would be able to earn, being at his ease and living in a different manner from that in which he lives here, and although he swears that what he earned at home was more, I do not wish to pay more than fifty thousand maravedis a year, beyond the salary which their highnesses give him, for the work which he does while he remains here. This sum I ask their highnesses to command to be paid with the salary here, and that although he says and affirms that all the physicians of your highnesses, who go to camps or who are employed in such matters as these, are accustomed to have of right a day's pay a year from all the people. Nevertheless I have been informed and they tell me that, however this may be, the custom is to give them a certain sum, estimated at will and by command of their highnesses, in lieu of that day's pay. You shall pray their highnesses to command provision to be made in this matter, as well concerning the question of the salary as concerning that of this customary payment, in such manner that the said doctor may have reason to be satisfied.

Their highnesses are pleased in this matter of doctor Chanca, and that there shall be paid to him that which the admiral has allowed to him, and that it be paid to him in addition to his salary.¹

Sus Altezas mandan asentar á mosén Pedro treynta mill maravedís cada año y á Gáspar y Béltrán á cada uno quinse mill maravedís cada año, desde oy quinse de agosto de .lxxxxiiii. en adelante, y así les haga pagar el almirante en lo que allá se oviere de pagar, y don Juan de Fonseca en lo que acá se oviere de pagar; y en lo de Juan Aguado Sus Altezas avrán memoria d'él á su cuesta.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas el trabajo qu'el doctor Chanca tiene con el afrenta de tantos dolientes, y aun la estrechura de los mantenimientos, é aun con todo ello se dispone con grand deligencia y caridad en todo lo que cunple á su oficio, y porque Sus Altesas remitieron á mi el salario que acá se le avía de dar, porque, estando acá, es cierto qu'él non toma ni puede aver nada de ninguno, ni ganar de su oficio como en Castilla ganava ó podría ganar, estando á su reposo é biviendo de otra manera que acá non bive, y así que como quiera qu'él jura que es más lo que allá ganava allende el salario que Sus Altezas le dan, y non me quise estender más de cinquenta mill maravedís por el trabajo que acá pasa cada un año, mientras acá estoviere, los quales suplico á Sus Altezas le manden librar con el sueldo de acá, y eso mismo porqu'él dise y afirma que todos los físicos de Vuestras Altezas, que andan en reales ó semejantes cosas que estas, suelen aver de derecho un día de sueldo en todo el año de toda la gente, con todo, he seydo ynformado, y dísenme que como quier que esto sea la costumbre, es de darles çierta suma tassada á voluntad y mandamiento de Sus Altezas, en compensa de aquel día de sueldo. suplicarés á Sus Altesas que en ello manden proveer asý en lo del salario como d'esta costumbre, por forma qu'el dicho doctor tenga rasón de ser contento.

A Sus Altezas plase d'esto del dotor Chanca, y que se le pague esto desde qu'el almirante ge lo asentó y que ge lo pague con lo del sueldo.

* For Chanca, cp. *supra*, p. 20, note 1. Ferdinand and Isabella wrote to thank him for his services (Letter, 11 Sept. 1494: *Doc. Inéd.* (1ª serie), 30, pp. 207-8).

In the matter of the day's pay of the physicians, they are not accustomed to have it except where the king, our lord, is in person.

Item: You shall speak to their highnesses of Coronel,¹ how he is a man to serve their highnesses in many ways, and how he has served up to now in all that is most essential, and how we feel his loss now that he is ill, and that having so served, it is reasonable that he should receive the fruit of his service, not only in rewards in the future, but in the matter of his salary at present, in such a way that he and those who are here may realize how service profits them. For, having regard to the labour which has to be performed here in collecting the gold, the persons in whom there is such diligence are not to be held in small consideration. And since for his capacity he has been granted by me the office of *aguacil mayor* of the Indies, and in the record of the appointment the salary is left blank, I pray their highnesses that they will command that it be filled up as may be best for their service, confirming the provision which I have here given to him, and granting it to him legally.

Their highnesses command that fifteen thousand maravedis be assigned to him above his salary annually, and that the sum be paid to him when his salary is paid.

In the same way you shall say to their highnesses that the bachiller Gil Garcia² came here as *alcalde mayor*, and that no salary has been assigned to him or fixed, and that he is a good man and learned and diligent, and is here very necessary. So that I pray their highnesses that they command to appoint and assign to him a salary, in such a way that he may be able to support himself, and that it may be paid to him with the money of his pay here.

Their highnesses command that there be assigned to him every year twenty thousand maravedis as long as he is there and beyond his salary, and that this be paid to him when his salary is paid.

¹ Pero Hernandez Coronel, who was one of the members of the council left

En esto del día del sueldo de los físicos non lo acostunbran aver syno donde el rey nuestro señor sea en persona.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas de Coronel, quanto es hombre para servir á Sus Altezas en muchas cosas, y quanto ha servido hasta aquí en todo lo más neçesario, y la mengua que d'él sentimos agora que está doliente, y que, sirviendo de tal manera, es rasón qu'él sienta el fruto de su servicio, non solo en las mercedes para después, mas en lo de su salario en lo presente, en manera qu'él é los que acá están syentan que los aprovecha el servicio; porque, segund el exerçio que acá se ha de tener en cojer este oro, non son de tener en poco las personas en quien tanta diligencia ay; y porque por su abilidad se proveyó acá por mi del ofio de alguazil mayor d'estas Yndias, y en la provisyón va el salario en blanco, que suplico á Sus Altesas gelo manden henchir como más sea su servicio, mirando sus servicios, confirmándole la provisión que acá se le dió, é proveyéndole d'el de juro.

Sus Altezas mandan que le asyenten quinse mill maravedís cada año más su sueldo, é que se le paguen quando le pagaren su sueldo.

Asymismo dirés á Sus Altesas como aquí vino el bachiller Gil García por alcayde mayor, é non se le ha consignado ni nombrado salario, y es persona de bien, y de buenas letras, y diligente, é se acá bien neçesario, que suplico á Sus Altezas le manden nombrar é consignar su salario, por manera qu'él se pueda sostener é le sea librado con el dinero del sueldo de acá.

Sus Altezas le mandan asentar cada año veynte mill maravedís, en tanto que allá estoviere, y más su sueldo, y que gelo paguen quando paguren el sueldo.

by Columbus to administer Isabella when he went on his voyage of discovery (cp. Las Casas, 82, 94). He commanded the caravels sent in advance by Columbus on his third voyage (Las Casas, i. 119), and was sent by Bartholomew Columbus to negotiate with Roldán, in which mission he was unsuccessful (Las Casas, *ibid.*).

² Nothing seems to be known of him.

Item: you shall say to their highnesses, although I have already written it in letters, that I do not consider that it will be possible during this year to go exploring, until the matter of these rivers, in which gold has been found, be settled in the manner proper for their highnesses' service. For afterwards it can be much better done, since it is not a matter which can be settled without my presence, according to my wish and the service of their highnesses, since, well as it might be done, yet it would be less certain than that which a man personally superintends.

Let him endeavour that the . . .¹ of this gold may be known as exactly as possible.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses that the *escuderos*² who came from Granada, at the inspection which was held in Seville, showed good horses, and that afterwards at the time of embarkation, I did not see to it, because I was a little indisposed, and they substituted such animals that the best of them does not seem to be worth two thousand maravedis. For they sold the others and bought these, and I see very well that this is the kind of thing which has been done to many people in the shows at Seville. It seems that Juan de Soria,³ after he had been given the money for the payment, for some personal interest, substituted others in place of those which I thought to find here, and I find people whom I had never seen. In this very bad faith has been shown, so I do not know whether to complain of him alone. For, although expenses have been paid to these attendants up to the present, in addition to their wages and the hire of their horses, and are now being paid, yet they are men who, when they are ill or it does not happen to suit them, will not allow their horses to be used except by themselves. In the same way, these men do not think that they should serve in any way except on horseback, and now at present that is not much needed. And consequently it seems that it would be better to buy the horses from them, though they are worth little, and not every

¹ Lacuna in the original.

² *Lanzas* of the Santa Hermandad. Ferdinand de Zafra was instructed to find twenty lanzas from among those of the Santa Hermandad in the kingdom of Granada, who were to be men of good character and willing to go to the Indies;

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altosas, como quier que ya se le escrivió por las cartas, que para este año no entiendo que sea posible yr á descubrir hasta que esto d'estos ríos, que se hallaron, de oro, sea puesto en el asyento devido á servicio de Sus Altosas; que después mucho mejor se podrá faser, porque no es cosa que nadie la podiese faser syn mi presençia á mi grado ni á servicio de Sus Altosas, por muy bien que lo fiziesen, como es en dubda, segund lo que hombre vee por su presençia.

Trabaje como, lo más presto que ser pueda, se sepa lo . . . d'este oro.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas como los escuderos de cavallo, que vinieron de Granada, en el alarde que fizieron en Sevilla mostraron buenos cavallos, é después, al embarcar, yo no lo ví, porque estava un poco doliente, y metiéronlos tales qu'el mejor d'ellos non paresçe que vale .ii. mil maravedís; porque vendieron los otros y compraron estos, y esto fué de la suerte que se hiso lo de mucha gente, que allá en los alardes de Sevilla yo ví muy buena paresçia, que Juan de Soria, después de dado el dinero del sueldo por algund ynterese suyo, puso otros en lugar de aquellos que yo acá pensava fallar, y fallo gente que yo nunca avía visto. en esto ha avido grand maldad, de tal manera que yo no sé sy me quexe d'él solo; por esto, visto que á estos escuderos, allende de su sueldo, se a fecho la costa hasta aquí, y también á sus cavallos, y se haze de presente, y son personas que, quando ellos están dolientes, ó non se les antoja, non quieren que sus cavallos sirvan syn ellos mismos, y esto mismo non les paresçe que devan servir en cosa ninguna syno á cavallo, lo que agora de presente non fase mucho al caso, é por esto paresçe que sería

five of them were to bring led mares; their pay and maintenance for themselves and their horses were provided, and they were to appear at Seville, 20 June 1493, to be inspected by Fonseca and Columbus: Villalva, veedor of the Hermandad at Seville, was to command them, pending embarkation (*Cédula to Zafra*, 23 May 1493; *Doc. Inéd.* (1ª serie), 19, pp. 501-3).

² Juan de Soria, secretary to prince Juan, was appointed to countersign and pass all orders for payment on account of the preparations for the second voyage, and to receive all goods coming from the Indies. Columbus quarrelled with him and complained of his lack of respect: Fonseca was ordered to reprimand Soria, who was also personally reprimanded by the sovereigns (cp. Navarrete, ii, pp. 44, 46, 48, 71, 89-90, 92, 93, 94, 95).

day to have these petty disputes with them. Therefore you shall ask that their highnesses determine this matter as may be for their service.

Their highnesses order Don Juan de Fonseca to make inquiries concerning the matter of the horses, and if it be found that such a deception has been practised, to send word to their highnesses that they may order it to be punished; and also that he secure information concerning that which is said of the other people, and send the result of the inquiry to their highnesses; and in the matter of these attendants, their highnesses command that they remain there and give service, since they are from the guards and servants of their highnesses; and their highnesses order the attendants that they shall hand over their horses whenever it be necessary and the admiral commands it, and if the horses receive any damage while ridden by others than them, by the medium of the admiral their highnesses order that payment shall be made to them.

Their highnesses do not wish these horses to be bought from them, but that they should serve as is said in the article on this matter.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses that there have come here more than two hundred persons without pay, and there are some of them who do good service, and moreover the others have similarly been ordered to do likewise. And since for these first three years it would be a great advantage that there should be here a thousand men to set in order and to place in a state of very great security this island and the rivers of gold, and though if there were a hundred mounted men, it would be no disadvantage but rather it is necessary, yet in the matter of these mounted men, until gold has been sent, their highnesses may leave the matter over; nevertheless, as to these two hundred persons who came without pay, their highnesses should send to say if wages should be paid to them as to others who are doing good service, for it is certain that they are needed as I have said at the beginning of this.

Of these two hundred persons who, he here says, went without pay, their highnesses command that they shall take the place of

mejor comprarles los cavallos, pues que tan poco valen, y non estar cada día con ellos en estas pendençias; por ende que Sus Altezas determinen esto como fuere su servicio.

Sus Altezas mandan á don Juan de Fonseca que se ynforme d'esto d'estos cavallos, y, si se hallare que es verdad que hisieron ese engaño, lo enbien á Sus Altezas, porque lo mandarán castigar; y también se ynforme d'eso que dise de la otra gente, y enbie la pesquisa á Sus Altezas. y en lo d'estos escuderos Sus Altezas mandan qu'estén allá y sirvan, pues son de las guardas y criados de Sus Altezas, y á los escuderos mandan Sus Altezas que den los cavallos cada vez que fuere menester y el almirante lo mandare; y si algund daño reçibieren los cavallos, yendo otros en ellos, por medio del almirante mandan Sus Altezas que gelo paguen.

Sus Altezas no quieren que se les compren estos cavallos, syno que sirvan así como en el capítulo d'esto dise.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas como aquí han venido más de dozientas personas syn sueldo, y ay algunos d'ellos que sirven bien, y aun los otros por semejante se mandan que lo hagan asý. y porque para estos primeros tres años será grand bien que aquí estén mill onbres para asentar y poner en muy grand seguridad esta ysla y ríos de oro, y aunque oviese çiento de cavallo non se perdería nada, antes paresçe neçesario, aunque en estos de cavallo, fasta que oro se enbie, Sus Altezas podrán sobreseer, con todo, á estas dozientas personas, que vienen syn sueldo, Sus Altezas deven enbiar á dezir sy se les pagará sueldo como á los otros, syrviendo bien, porque çierto son neçesarios, como dicho tengo, para este comienço.

D'estas dozientas personas que aquí dise que fueron syn sueldo, mandan Sus Altezas que entren en lugar de los que han

*those who have failed or shall fail among those who went for wages, they being capable and it being satisfactory to the admiral, and their highnesses command the contador that he enrol them in place of those who shall be at fault as the admiral may direct.*¹

Item: In order that to some extent the expense of these people may be reduced by care, and by the methods which other princes are accustomed to employ in other cases, the greater part of the expenditure here may be avoided, it seems that it would be well to give orders that in the ships which come there be brought in addition to the other things, which are for the maintenance of the community, and to medicine, shoes and skins from which they can be ordered to be made, coarse shirts, and for other things, doublets, linen, sacking, breeches, cloth for making clothes, at a reasonable price; and other things, such as conserves, which are outside the rations and which are for the preservation of health. All these things the people here would receive with pleasure on account of their pay, and if this supply were bought there by honest agents and such as consider the service of their highnesses, there would be some economy. Accordingly you shall learn the will of their highnesses in this matter, and if it appear to them to be for their service, the matter should at once be put in train.

*For this voyage it may be postponed, until the admiral writes more fully, and they will send orders already to Don Juan de Fonseca and Jimeno de Bribiesca that provision be made in this matter.*²

Item: You shall also say to their highnesses that inasmuch as yesterday in the inspection which was held, the people were found to be very deficient in arms, which I think resulted in some degree from the exchange which was made there in Seville or in the port, when those who appeared armed were left, and others taken who gave something to those who exchanged with them, it seems that it would be well that two hundred cuirasses, and a hundred arquebuses and a hundred crossbows, and much ammunition should be

¹ Columbus had laid down, in a memorial on the needs of Española (assigned

faltado y faltaren de los que yvan á sueldo, seyendo áviles y á contentamiento del almirante, y Sus Altezas mandan al contador que los asiente en lugar de los que faltaren, como el almirante lo dixere, &c.

Ytem, porque en algo la costa d'esta gente se puede aliviar con yndustria y formas que otros príncipes suelen tener en otras, lo gastado mejor que acá se podría escusar. paresçe que sería bien mandar traer en los navíos que vinieren, allende de las otras cosas que son para los mantenimientos comunes y de la botica, çapatos y cueros para los mandar fazer, camisas comunes y de otras, jabones, lienço, sayos, calças, paños para vestir, en razonables preçios, y otras cosas, como son conservas, que son fuera de ración y para conservación de la salud; las quales cosas todas la gente de acá rescibiría de grado en descuento de su sueldo, y sy allá esto se mercase por ministros leales y que mirasen el provecho de Sus Altezas, se ahorrarian algo. por ende sabréis la voluntad de Sus Altezas çerca d'esto, y, sy les pareciere ser su servicio, luego se deve poner en obra.

Por este camino se sobrerer, fasta que más escriba el almirante, y ya enbiarán mandar á don Juan de Fonseca con Ximeno de Briviesca que provea esto.

Ytem, tanbién dirés á Sus Altezas que, por quanto ayer en el alarde que se tomó se halló la gente muy desarmada, lo qual pienso que en parte contesçio por aquel trocar que allá se hizo en Sevilla ó en el puerto, quando se dexaron los que se mostraron armados y tomaron otros que davan algo á quien los trocava, paresçe que sería bien que se mandase traer dozientas coraças, y cien espingardas, y cien ballestas, y

by De Lollis to the eve of the second voyage), that two thousand settlers were needed (*Rac. Col.* I. i. p. 136). From motives of economy, the sovereigns were unwilling to pay for more than two hundred, although others were allowed to go at their own expense and actually fifteen hundred men embarked on the second voyage (*Las Casas*, i. 82). The difficulty of reconciling the needs of the colony with the royal desire for economy was recurrent, and led at a later date to the idea of converting Española into a penal settlement (cp. *Navarrete*, ii. 212-18; and *Las Casas*, i. 112).

² Cp. *Navarrete*, ii. 162-4.

ordered to be sent; for it is material of which we have much need and from all these arms, those who are unarmed could be supplied.¹

It has been already written to Don Juan de Fonseca that he make provision in this matter.

Item: Inasmuch as some artisans who have come here, such as masons and men of other trades, are married and have wives at home, and wish that what is due to them for wages should be given to their wives at home or to the persons to whom they may send their requirements, in order that they may buy for them the things of which they have need here, I ask their highnesses that they order payment to be made to them, for their service is that provision be made for these men here.

Their highnesses have already sent to command Don Juan de Fonseca that he provide for this.

Item: Besides the other things which have been sent for according to the request in the memorials which you bear, signed by my hand, for the maintenance of the healthy as well as for the sick, it would be very well that there should be obtained from the island of Madeira fifty pipes of molasses, for it is the best nourishment in the world and very healthy. And each pipe does not generally cost more than two ducats, excluding the casks, and if their highnesses command that on the return voyage some caravel goes that way, it would be possible to buy them and also ten cases of sugar, which is very necessary. For this is the best season of the year, I mean between now and the month of April, for getting it and for having it at a reasonable rate, and, by command of their highnesses, it would be possible to give the order and that they should not know there for what destination it is required.

Don Juan de Fonseca is to provide for this.

Item: You shall say to their highnesses that, although the rivers contain the amount of gold which is reported by

¹ For the supply of arms to those going on the second voyage, Garcia Fernandez

mucho almacén, que es la cosa que más menester avemos, y de todas estas armas se podrán dar á los desarmados.

Ya se escribe á don Juan de Fonseca que provea esto.

Ytem, por quanto algunos oficiales que acá vinieron, como son albañies y de otros oficios, que son casados y tienen sus mugeres allá, y querrían que allá lo que se les deve de su sueldo se diese á sus mugeres ó á las personas á quien ellos enbiaren sus recabdos para que les compren las cosas que acá han menester, que á Sus Altezas suplico los manden librar, porque su servicio es que estos estén proveýdos acá.

Ya enbiaron mandar Sus Altezas á don Juan de Fonseca que provea en esto.

Ytem, porque, allende las otras cosas que allá se enbían á pedir por los memoriales que lleváys de mi mano firmados asý para mantenimientos de los sanos como para los dolientes, sería muy bien que se oviesen de la ysla de la Madera çinquenta pipas de miel de açúcar, porqu'es el mejor mantenimiento del mundo y más sano, y non suele costar cada pipa syno á dos ducados syn el casco, y, sy Sus Altezas mandan que á la buelta pase por allí alguna caravela, las podrá mercar, y también diez caxas de açúcar, que es mucho menester, que esta es la mejor sazón del año, digo entre aquí é el mes de abril, para hallarlo é aver d'ello buena rasón; y podríase dar horden, mandándolo Sus Altesas, é que non supiesen allá para donde lo quieren.

Don Juan de Fonseca que provea en esto.

Ytem, dirés á Sus Altezas, por quanto aunque los ríos tengan en la cantidad que se dise por los que lo han visto, pero que lo çierto d'ello es qu'el oro non se engendra en los ríos, mas en la tierra, qu'el agua, topando con las minas, lo trae enbuelto

Manrique, alcaide of Malaga, and Rodrigo de Narvaez were responsible (cp. Navarrete, ii. pp. 45, 46).

those who have seen them, yet it is certain that the gold is produced not in the rivers, but on land, and that the water, penetrating the mines, carries it away mingled with sand. And among as many rivers as have been discovered, although there are some which are large, there are others so small that they are rather brooks than rivers, for they have only two fingers' depth of water, and the source from which they come may be speedily found. Accordingly not only will labourers to collect it from the sand be useful, but further others to dig it from the earth, where it will be of the best quality and in the greatest abundance. And for this reason it will be well that their highnesses should send labourers and from among those who work in the mines there in Almaden,¹ so that the work may be carried on in the one way and the other. We shall not here wait for them, however, for with the labourers whom we have here, we hope, with the help of God, if once the people be restored to health, to send a good quantity of gold by the first caravels that go.

For the next voyage, provision shall be made for this completely; meanwhile their highnesses command Don Juan de Fonseca that he sends at once as many miners as he can get, and they write to Almaden that from there they take as many as they can and send them.

Item: You shall pray their highnesses very humbly on my behalf that they will be pleased to regard Villacorta² as strongly recommended. As their highnesses know, he has done much service in this matter, and with very good will, and, as I know him, he is a person, diligent and devoted to their service. I shall regard it as a favour if some position of trust be given to him, for which he may be suited, and be able to show his desire to serve and his diligence. And this you shall procure in such a way that Villacorta may know from the event that what he has done for me when I had need of him, has been of profit to himself.

So it shall be done.

Item: That the said Mosen Pedro and Gaspar and Beltran and others who have remained here came as captains of caravels, which have gone back, and they do not enjoy the

en las arenas; y porque en estos tantos ríos se han descubierto, como quiera que ay algunos grandecitos, ay otros tan pequeños, que son más fuentes que no ríos, que non llevan de dos dedos de agua, y se halla luego el cabo donde nasce, para lo qual non solo serán provechosos los labadores para cojerlo en l'arena, mas los otros para cavarlo en la tierra, que será lo más especial é de mayor cantidad, é por esto será bien que Sus Altezas enbíen labadores é de los que andan en las minas allá en almadenes, porque en la una manera y en la otra se haga el exerciçio, como quier que acá non esperaremos á ellos, que con los labadores que aquí tenemos esperamos, con la ayuda de Dios, sy una vez la gente está sana, allegar un buen golpe de oro para las primeras caravelas que fueren.

Otro camino se proveerá esto complidamente. en tanto mandan Sus Altezas á don Juan de Fonseca que enbíe luego los más minadores que pudiere aver, y escriven al almadén que de allí tomen los que más pudieren, y los enbíen.

Ytem, suplicarés á Sus Altezas de mi parte muy hùmilmente que quieran tener por muy encomendado á Villacorta, el qual, como Sus Altezas saben, ha mucho servido en esta negoçiación y con muy buena voluntad; y, segund le conosco persona diligente y afeçionada á su servicio, rescibiré merced que se le dé algund cargo de confiança, para lo qual él sea suficiente y pueda mostrar su deseo de servir, y diligencia; y esto procuraréis por forma qu'el Villacorta conosca por la obra que lo que ha trabajado por mi en lo que yo le ove menester le aprovecha en esto.

Asy se hará.

Ytem, que los dichos mosén Pedro, y Gáspar, y Beltrán, y otros, que han quedado acá, traxieron capitanías de caravelas que son agora bueltas, y non gozan del sueldo; pero, porque

¹ Almadén de Azoque, in Estremadura, one of the richest quicksilver mines in the world, which has been worked since Roman times.

² Cp. *supra*, p. 74, note 6.

pay, but as they are such persons as should be employed in important and confidential matters, their pay has not been settled but should be such as may be different from that of the others. You shall pray their highnesses on my behalf to determine that which should be given to them annually or monthly, as may be best for their service.

Done in the city of Isabella, on the thirtieth day of January of the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-five.¹

This has been already answered above, but as in the said clause he says that they should receive their salary, it is now the command of their highnesses that their salaries shall be paid to them from the time when they gave up their commands.

¹ The sovereigns acknowledged the receipt of the letters of Columbus, 13 April 1494 (Navarrete, ii. 115). De Torres did not immediately go to the court on arrival, but forwarded some of the documents entrusted to him.



son tales personas que se han de poner en cosas principales y de confianza, no se les ha determinado el sueldo, que sea diferenciado de los otros. suplicarés de mi parte á Sus Altezas determinen lo que se les da de dar en cada un año ó por meses, como más fueren servidos.

Hecho en la cibdad Ysabela, á .xxx. días de henero de .lxxxxiiii. años.

Ya está respondido arriba; pero, porque en el dicho capítulo que en esto habla dise que gosan del salario, desde agora mandan Sus Altezas que se les cuenten á todos sus salarios desde que dexaron las capitánías.

3. *Andrés Bernáldez, History of the Catholic Sovereigns, Don Ferdinand and Doña Isabella.*¹ Chapters 123–131.

THE admiral set out to discover the mainland of the Indies on the twenty-fourth day of the month of April of the said year 1494. He left in the city as presidents his brother² and a friar, who was called Fray Benil, and he ordained that which each one was to do.³ And he set out with three square rigged caravels⁴ and in a few days arrived at the very famous harbour of San Nicolas,⁵ which is in the same island of Española and opposite cape Alfaeto,⁶ which is in Juana, which he judged to be an island and which is mainland, the end and extremity of the Indies to the east. And he directed his course to that cape and reached it and did not follow the line of the coast to the north, in which direction he had gone on his first voyage, and steered to the west, following the other coast on the southern side. Both these shores trend westwards, the one pointing away from the arctic pole and the other approaching towards it owing to the narrowness of the land, which begins in a point and broadens to the northward. He navigated for the southern part, leaving the land of Juana on his right hand, expecting to round it and to run, after leaving the cape, towards that which he desired, which was to seek the province and city of Catayo, which is under the

¹ For Andrés Bernáldez, cp. *supra*, Introduction, pp. cxlvi *et seq.*

² The brother was Diego Columbus. The date of his birth is usually given as c. 1466, but Ulloa (*Xristo-Ferens Colom*, pp. 119–123) has argued that he was really the eldest of the three brothers. He accompanied Columbus on his second voyage, but after acting as president of the council for governing Isabella in the absence of the admiral, he returned to Spain, probably in 1495, and received permission to reside where he pleased in that country (Navarrete, ii. 175). Having returned to Española, he was arrested by Bobadilla (Las Casas, i. 181 and *infra*, vol. II, p. 56), and sent back to Castile. Diego was anxious to enter the church; Las Casas (i. 82) says that he seems to have aspired to a bishopric, and this suggestion is borne out by the fact that Diego secured letters of naturalization (8 Feb. 1504; Navarrete, ii. 300), which were not required for mere ordination as a priest, but which were essential if high preferment were desired, since in the case of the bishop of Cuenca, Ferdinand and Isabella had insisted that such preferment should be confined to their own subjects. Diego returned to Española with his nephew, the second admiral, and eventually died at Seville in 1515. He held a repartimiento of Indians in Española and seems to have amassed a small

3. *Andrés Bernáldez, Historia de los Reyes Católicos, Don Fernando y Doña Isabel, Capítulos 123-131.*

PARTIÓ el almirante á descubrir la tierra firme de las Indias á .24. días del mes de abril del dicho año de .1494. dexó en la ciudad por presidentes á su hermano é á un fraile, que se decía fray Benil, y, ordenado lo que cada uno avía de hazer; é partió con tres carabelas de bela redonda, y en pocos días llegado a(1) muy señalado puerto de San Nicolao, el qual está en la mesma isla Española, frontero del cavo de Alfaeto, que es en la Juana, que él juzgava por isla y es tierra firme, fin y cavo de las Indias por el oriente, y endereçó al dicho cavo, é llegó á él é dexó de seguir la tierra de la costa del setentríon, por donde el biaje primero avía andado, y navegó al poniente corriendo la otra costa de la parte del austro, las quales costas ban así anbas al poniente, desbiándose la una del polo ártico y la otra acercándose á él por la anchura de la tierra, que comienza por angosto y ba subiendo al setentríon. y por la parte del austro, dexando la tierra de la Juana sobre la mano derecha, navegó, pensando dar la buelta al rrededor,

fortune, since in his will he left a considerable sum to the son of Barbola, a negress and a former domestic servant in the household of his nephew. Las Casas (i. 82) describes Diego as virtuous, peace-loving and simple-minded; he appears to have been wholly unfitted for the position assigned to him by Columbus on this occasion.

² The friar was Fray Buil. The government of Isabella was actually entrusted to a commission of five, consisting of Diego Columbus, as president; Buil; Pero Hernandez Coronel, the *alguacil mayor*; Alonso Sanchez de Carvajal, and Juan de Lujan. Pedro Margarit was left in command of the military forces. The appointment of Diego Columbus seems to have aroused much jealousy, and was certainly an error (cp. Las Casas, i. 94, 100, 101).

⁴ Las Casas (i. 94) says that Columbus took a *nao*, large ship, and two caravels, but it is more probable that all three were small vessels, judging from their apparent draught. They were the *Santa Clara Niña*, the *San Juan*, and the *Cardera*.

⁵ In the extreme west of Española. It figures on the sketch-map of the coast of the island probably drawn by Columbus himself (cp. *Nuevos Autografos*; and Streicher, *Die Kolumbus-Originale*).

⁶ Alpha et Omega, so named by Columbus because he supposed it to be the end of the East (Peter Martyr, i. 3). As Oviedo (xvii. 1) says that it was within sight from Cape San Nicolas, the point must be the modern Cape Maisi, the extreme easterly point of Cuba. Las Casas (i. 94) says that the cape was called in the native language, Bayatiquiri.

dominion of the Grand Khan, saying that he could reach it by this route. Of it is read, as John Mandeville says and others who have seen it, that it is the richest province in the world and the most abounding in gold and silver, in all metals and silks. But the people are all idolaters and subtle; they are necromancers and are learned in all arts and noble, and of them many marvels are written, as the noble English knight, John Mandeville relates, who went there and saw and lived with the Grand Khan for some while. Any one who wishes to know the truth of this may read in his book in the eighty-fifth and eighty-seventh and eighty-eighth chapters, and there he will see that the city of Catayo is very noble and rich, and that its district has the name of the city.¹ This province and city lie in the parts of Asia, near the lands of Prester John of the Indies,² in the district which dominates and looks towards the north, and in that direction in which the admiral sought it. I say that it must needs take a great space of time to reach it, for the Grand Khan was anciently lord of the Tartars, and Grand Tartary is on the borders of Ruxia³ and Bahia,⁴ and we may say that Grand Tartary begins from Hungary, which are lands that, looking from this Andalusia, are on the right where the sun rises in the month of the longest days in the year, and in that direction the merchants were accustomed to go into that country. Accordingly it is my belief that in the direction in which the admiral sought for Catayo, traversing the firmament of sea and land for a further thousand two hundred leagues, he would not arrive there, and so I told him and gave him to understand in the year 1496,⁵ when he came the first time into Castile after he had gone to discover and was my guest and left with me some of his writings,⁶ in the presence of the lord Don Juan de Fonseca,⁷ whence I have drawn and have compared them with other writings which the honoured lord, doctor Anca

¹ Cp. Mandeville, ed. Pollard, cc. 23-8.

² Mandeville, c. 30.

³ Russia (cp. Mandeville, cc. 1, 27).

⁴ Not identified with any certainty.

⁵ The visit of Columbus to Bernáldez must have occurred when the admiral returned to Spain after the mission of Aguado. Bernáldez is strictly accurate in

y correr después de ber el cavo la vía de su deseo, que hera buscar la provincia y ciudad del Catayo, diciendo que la podría allar por allí, que es en el señorío del gran can, la cual se lee, según dice Juan de Mandavilla y otros que la bieron, que es la más rica provincia del mundo, é la más abundosa de oro é plata, é de todos metales é sedas; pero son todos idólatras y jente muy agudísima, y nigromántica, y savia en todas artes y cavallerosa, y de ella se escriven muchas maravillas, según quenta el noble cavallero inglés Juan de Mandavilla, que lo andubo y vido y bivió con el gran can algún tiempo. quien d'esto quisiere saver lo cierto lea en su libro en el ochenta y cinco, é ochenta y siete, é ochenta é ocho capítulos, y allí berá como la ciudad del Catayo es muy noble é rica, é como la provincia suya tiene el nombre de la ciudad. la qual provincia é ciudad es en las partidas de Asia cerca de las tierras del preste Juan de las Indias, en la parte que señorea y mira el norte, y por donde el almirante lo buscava. yo digo que avía menester grande distançia de tiempo para lo hallar, porque el gran can fué antiguamente señor de los Tártaros; é desde la Gran Tartaria, que es en los fines de Ruxía é Bahía, é podemos decir que se comiença la Gran Tartaria desde Ungría, que son tierras que están mirando desde esta Andalucía por el derecho de donde sale el sol en el mes de los mayores días del año, y por aquel derecho solían yr los mercadeles en aquella tierra, que por la banda que el almirante buscava el Catayo, es mi creer que con otras mill é ducientas leguas, andando el firmamento de la mar é tierra en derredor no llegase allá, y así se lo dixe y hice entender yo el año de .1496., quando bino en Castilla la primera bez después de aver ido á descubrir, que fué mi guésped é me dejó algunas de sus escrituras, en presencia del señor don Juan de Fonseca, de donde yo saqué y cotejélas

saying that this was the first visit of the 'admiral' to Castile, after he had gone to discover, since it was only after his return from his first voyage that Columbus was formally created 'Almirante del Mar Océano'.

⁶ The account which follows of the voyage of Columbus supplies many indications that it was directly derived from the admiral (cp. *supra*, Introduction, pp. cxlix-cl). It is possible that Bernáldez had in his possession the 'book' which he says that Columbus made about his voyage (cp. *infra*, p. 158).

⁷ Cp. *supra*, p. 84, note 2.

or Ochanca,¹ has written and other noble gentlemen who were with him on the voyages already mentioned and who wrote that which they saw, by which I was informed. And I have written this of the Indies, as being a thing marvellous and unparalleled, which Our Lord willed to be made manifest in the time of the good fortune and reign of king Don Ferdinand and of queen Doña Isabella, his first wife.

So the admiral, thinking that Juana was an island, went for a great distance along its coast and asked the Indians whether it was an island or Tierra Firme. And as they are a brutish race and think that the whole world is an island and knew not what thing Tierra Firme might be, and have neither letters nor ancient memorials, and take no pleasure in anything save eating and women, they said that it was an island, although some said that it was an island but that it was not to be traversed in forty moons.² And as they followed the coast farther, so the land continued to stretch on farther towards the south. Accordingly he thought well to leave Juana and to go to the west and then to the north, where he thought to find the noble city and most rich province of Catayo. And he had of necessity to follow this course which led him farther from the land, and in this way he discovered the island of Jamaica, and he returned to follow the coast of Tierra Firme,³ proceeding along it for seventy days, until he had reached a point very near the Golden Chersonese,⁴ where he turned back from fear of the weather and on account of the very great length of the voyage and the scarcity of supplies. And there he formed the opinion that, if he were fortunate, he would be able to return to Spain by the East, coming to the Ganges and thence to the Arabian Gulf, and afterwards by way of Ethiopia, and afterwards he would be able to come by land to Jerusalem, and thence to Jaffa, and to embark and enter upon the Mediterranean Sea and thence come to Cadiz. The voyage could certainly be made in this way, but it would be very dangerous by land, since they are all Moors from Ethiopia to Jerusalem. But he could nevertheless have gone by sea and have gone from there to Calicut which is the city that the Portuguese have

¹ Dr. Chanca. The account which Bernáldez gives of the first part of the

con las otras que escrivieron el onrrado señor el doctor Anca ó Ochanca, é otros nobles cavalleros que con él fueron en los biajes ya dichos, que escribieron lo que bieron, de donde yo fuí informado, y escriví esto de las Indias, por cosa muy maravillosa y açañosa, que Nuestro Señor quiso demostrar en la buena bentura y tienpo del rey don Fernando y de la reyna doña Isabel, su primera mujer.

Ansí que el almirante, pensando que la Juana hera isla, andubo mucho por la costa de ella, y preguntaba á los Indios si era ysla ó tierra firme, y como ellos son jente bestial y piensan que todo el mundo es isla y no saben qué cosa sea tierra firme, ni tienen letras ni memorias antiguas, ni se deleitan en otra cosa sino en comer é en mujeres, decían que hera ysla, enpero algunos le dijeron que hera isla, mas que no la andaría en quarenta lunas, é mientras más seguían la costa, más los echava la tierra al austro; que él bien pensó dar buelta á la Juana y bolver al poniente, y dende al setentríon, donde pensava allar la noble probincia y ciudad riquísima del Catayo, y ubo por fuerça de seguir aquella banda, por donde la tierra lo desbiava de sí, y descubrió por aquella bía la isla de Jamaica, y bolvió á seguir la costa de la tierra firme setenta días andando por ella, hasta aver pasado á estar muy cerca al Aurea Chersoneso, donde tomó la buelta por el temor de los tienpos y por la grandísima navegazón y mengua de mantenimientos, é allí le bino en miente que, si próspero se hallara, que probara el bolver á España por oriente, biniendo al Ganjes, y dende al sino arábico, y después por Etiopía, é después pudiera benir por la tierra á Jerusalem, y dende á Japha, y embarcar y entrar en el mar mediteráneo, é dende á Cális. el biaje bien se pudiera hazer d'esta manera, enpero hera muy peligroso de la tierra, porque son todos Moros dende Etiopía á Jerusalem, enpero él pudiera yr por la mar todavía, y ir desde allá fasta Calicud, que es la ciudad que descubrieron los Portugueses, y para no salir por tierra sino todavía por agua, él avía de

second voyage, down to the foundation of Isabella, is drawn almost entirely from Chanca.

² Cp. *infra*, pp. 134, 136, 138.

³ Cuba (cp. *infra*, p. 128).

⁴ The Malay Peninsula.

discovered, and in order not to go by land but by water, always, he would have had to return by the same Ocean Sea, circumnavigating all Libya, which is the country of the negroes, and to go by the route by which the Portuguese come with the spice of Calicut.

Let it suffice to say that after the admiral had on this voyage gone three hundred and twenty-two leagues,¹ at the rate of four miles to the league, as they are wont to reckon at sea, from cape Alfaeto, he returned but not by the route by which he had gone. And when he passed by that cape Alfaeto, which is at the beginning of the lands of Juana, he set up there columns, crosses, taking possession for their highnesses. And it was very well done, since it was the extreme cape and harbour, for you must know that this is the extreme headland point of Tierra Firme: to the west, the extreme point is Cape St. Vincent which is in Portugal. Between these two capes is contained all the population of the world, so that one who should set out by land from Cape St. Vincent could go always eastwards without crossing any part of the Ocean Sea until he arrived at Cape Alfaeto and from Alfaeto in the opposite direction he whom God should aid on the journey could come to Cape St. Vincent by dry land.

Turning to continue the account and to record more in detail the islands and lands and seas which the said admiral discovered on that voyage, he proceeded by sea, as has been said, leaving Tierra Firme on the right hand, as far as a very remarkable harbour, which he named *Puerto Grande*.² In that land the trees and plants bear fruit twice a year; this is known and proved to be true. From them came a very sweet scent which was wafted out to sea in many places. In that harbour there was no settlement, and as they entered it, they saw to the right hand many fires close to the sea and a dog and two beds, but no people. They went on shore and found more than four *quintals*³ of fish cooking over the fire, and rabbits,⁴ and two serpents, and very near there in many places they were laid at the foot of the trees. In

¹ It was upon this occasion that Columbus caused Fernand Perez de Luna, notary public, to take the sworn depositions of the crews of the three vessels on the question whether Cuba was in their opinion an island or the mainland. It

bolver por el mismo mar Océano rodeando toda Libia, que es la tierra de los negros, y bolver por donde bienen los Portugueses con la espeçiería de Calaud. abasta que después de aver andado el almirante en este biaje trecientas é veinte y dos leguas, á quatro millas cada una, así como acostumbran en la mar, desde el cavo de Alfaeto, se bolvió sino por el camino por donde avía ido, y quando pasó por aquel cavo de Alfaeto, que está al comienço de la tierra Juana, puso allí columnas de cruces, tomando la posesión por Sus Alteças, y fué muy bien fecho, pues remanceió ser el extremo cavo é puerto, que devéis saver que aquel es extremo caverro cavo de la tierra firme; del poniente, el cavo de San Vicente que está en Portugal, en medio de los quales cayos ambos se contiene todo el poblado del mundo, que quien partiese por tierra desde el cavo de San Vicente podrá ir siempre al lebante sin pasar ninguna cosa del mar Océano hasta llegar al cavo de Alfaeto é desde Alfaeto por la contra benir hasta el cavo de San Vicente por tierra firme á quien Dios ayudase en el viaje.

Tornando á proseguir é recontar más á menudo las islas é tierras é mares que el dicho almirante descubrió de aquel biaje, siguió por la mar, como dicho es, dejando la tierra firme á la mano derecha, hasta un puerto muy singularísimo, al qual llamó 'puerto Grande'. en aquella tierra los árboles y las yervas lleban dos beces en el año frutos; esto se supo y experimentó por verdad, de los quales muy suabísimo olor salía, que alcançaba en gran parte á la mar. en aquel puerto no abía población, y como entraron en él, bieron á mano derecha muchos fuegos juntos con el agua, y un perro y dos camas sin personas. decindieron en tierra y hallaron más de quatro quintales de peces en asadores al fuego, y conejos, y dos serpientes, y allí en muy cerca estaban en muchos lugares puestas al pie de los árboles. ay en muchos lugares

was on the supposition that they had coasted along it for three hundred and twenty-two leagues that the crews declared that Cuba could not be an island (cp. Navarrete, ii. 143-9, and *Geographical Journal*, March 1929). It is from this document that the names of the three caravels can be drawn.

² The bay of Guantanamo.

³ A quintal is equivalent to forty-six kilogrammes.

⁴ Oviedo (xvii. 4) mentions the 'guabiniquinax' and the 'ayre' as being animals in Cuba which were similar to rabbits.

many places there were many serpents, the most disgusting and nauseating things which men ever saw, all with their mouths sewn up.¹ And they were the colour of dry wood, and the skin of the whole body was very wrinkled, especially that of their heads, and it fell down over their eyes. And they were venomous and terrifying, and were all covered with very hard shells, as a fish is covered with scales. From the head to the tip of the tail, down the middle of the back, they had long projections, disgusting, and sharp as the points of diamonds. The admiral ordered the fish to be taken, and with it refreshed his men.

And afterwards, while exploring the harbour in the boat, they saw on the crest of a hill many people, naked according to the custom there, and making signs to them that they should come near, one did so. There was an Indian, one of those who had come to Castile, whom the admiral carried with him as an interpreter, and who now knew Castilian well and also understood the Indians.² He spoke to this man and the strange Indian answered from the top of a rock, and as he understood the other, he gained confidence and called the rest, who were some seventy men in all. They said that they were going hunting by command of their cacique, in preparation for a feast which they were going to make. And the admiral commanded that hawks' bells and other trifling things should be given to them, and ordered them to be told that they must pardon him, that he had taken the fish and nothing else. And they were greatly rejoiced when they knew that they had not taken their serpents, and replied that all was well, since they would fish again at night.

Next day he left that place before sunrise and followed the coast of the country westward. They saw that it was a very populous and very lovely land. When they saw such great ships, many people and children, small and great, came down to the shore, bringing to them bread and things to eat, running along, showing the bread and calabashes full of water, and crying, 'Eat! Take! Men from heaven!' and asking them to land and to come to their houses, and others came out in their canoes for the same purpose. So they navigated to a gulf where

¹ Cp. *supra*, p. 10.

muchas serpientes, las más asquerosas y feas cosas que los hombres vieron, é todas cosidas las bocas, y eran de color de madera seca, y el cuero de todo el cuerpo muy arugado, en especial en la caveça, que le descendía sobre los ojos, los quales tenían benenosos y espantables, y todas heran cubiertas de sus conchas muy fuertes, como un pece, de escama; y desde la caveça hasta la punta de la cola por medio del cuerpo tenían unas conchas altas, feas y agudas como puntas de diamantes; é mandó el almirante tomar el pescado, con que ubo refresco la jente, y después andando buscando puerto con la barca, vieron del cavo de un cerro mucha jente desnuda á la costumbre de allá, y, haciéndoles señal que se allegasen, allegó uno y falló un Indio que el almirante llevaba por intérprete de los que avían benido á Castilla, que entendía ya bien castellano, y entendía también á los Indios, y el Indio extraño fablava desde encima de una piedra, y como entendió al otro, aseguróse y llamó á la otra jente, que heran obra de setenta hombres, los quales dixeron que andaban caçando por mandado de su cacique para una fiesta que querían facer, y el almirante les mandó dar cascaveles y otras cosillas, y mandóles decir que perdonasen, que él avía tomado el pescado, y no otra cosa, y olgaron mucho quando supieron que no les avían tomado las serpientes, y respondieron que fuese todo en buena hora, que ellos pescarían más á la noche.

salió de allí otro día, antes que saliese el sol, siguió al poniente la costa de la tierra, la qual bían ser muy poblada y muy fermosa tierra, y como bían tales navíos, benían á las playas á ber muchas jentes y niños chicos y grandes, trayéndoles pan y cosas de comer, corriendo mostrando el pan y las calabazas llenas de agua, llamando 'comed, tomad, jente del cielo', y rogávanles que decindiesen y fuesen á sus casas, y otros benían en canoas á lo mesmo, y así navegaron hasta un golfo donde avía infinitas poblaciones, y las tierras y campos heran tales, que todas parecían guertas las más fermosas del mundo y todas tierras altas y montañas. surjieron allí y la gente de la comarca luego vinieron allí y traíanles pan y agua

² According to Las Casas (i. 96), this interpreter was the Indian who had been baptized in Castile as Diego Colón.

there was an infinite number of dwellings, and the lands and fields were such that they appeared to be the loveliest gardens in the world, and the whole district was lofty and mountainous.¹ There they anchored and the people of the neighbourhood at once came thither and brought to them bread and water and fish. And afterwards, on the following day, at dawn, they left that place, and having gone as far as a cape,² the admiral then resolved to abandon that course and that land. And they navigated in search of the island of Jamaica, to the southward, and at the end of two days and two nights, with a fair wind, they reached it, striking a central point in it.³

And the island is the most lovely that eyes have seen. It is not mountainous, and the country seems to rise towards the sky. It is very large, greater than Sicily, having a circumference of eight hundred leagues—I mean, miles—and all full of valleys and fields and plains.⁴ It is a very mighty land, and beyond measure populous, so that even on the sea-shore as well as inland, every part is filled with villages and those very large and very near one another, at four leagues' distance. They have more canoes than in any other part of those regions, and the largest that have yet been seen, all, as has been said, made each from a single tree trunk. In all those parts, every cacique has a great canoe, of which he is proud and which is for his service, as here a caballero prides himself on possessing a great and beautiful ship. So they have them decorated at the bow and stern with metal bands and with paintings, so that their beauty is wonderful. One of these large canoes which the admiral measured was ninety-six feet long and eight feet broad.

As soon as the admiral arrived off the coast of Jamaica, there immediately came out against him quite seventy canoes, all full of people with darts as weapons. They advanced a league out to sea, with warlike shouts and in battle array. And the admiral with his three caravels and his people paid no attention to them and continued to steer towards the shore, and when they saw this, they became alarmed and turned in flight. The admiral made use of his interpreter,⁵ so that one of those canoes was reassured and came to him

¹ The bay of Santiago de Cuba, behind which lies the Sierra Maestra.

y pescado; y luego otro día siguiente, en amaneciendo, partieron de allí, y andando hacia un cavo, después determinó el almirante de dejar aquel camino y aquella tierra, y navegaron en busca de la isla Jamaica al austro, y en cavo de dos días y dos noches allegaron á ella con buen biento, y fueron á dar en el medio d'ella, la qual es la más fermosa que los ojos bieron. ella no es montañosa, y parece que llega la tierra al cielo, es muy grande, mayor que Sicilia, tiene en cerco ochocientas leguas, digo millas, é toda llena de balles é campos é planos; es fortísima y populentísima ultramodo, que así á la lengua del mar como en la tierra adentro toda es llena de poblaciones y muy grandes y muy cerca unos de otros á quatro leguas; tienen canoas más que en ninguna otra parte de por allí, y las más grandes que fasta entonces se avían visto, todas de un tronco, como dicho es, enteras de un árbol, y cada cacique de todas aquellas partes tiene una canoa grande, de que se precia y sirve como acá un cavallero que se precia de tener una nao grande y fermosa. ellos así traen labradas aquellas canoas en proa y popa á laços y pinturas, que es maravilla la fermosura de ellas; en una de aquellas grandes midió el almirante nobenta y seis pies de luengo, y ocho pies de ancho.

Así como el almirante llegó acerca de la tierra de Jamayca, luego salieron contra él bien setenta canoas, todas cargadas de jente y baras, por armas, una legua en la mar, en son y forma de pelear, y el almirante con sus tres caravelas é jente no dió por ellos nada, é siguió todavía el camino de la tierra, é, desque esto bieron, ubieron miedo é bolvieron huyendo, é el almirante tubo forma con su faraute, como una de aquellas

² Some point between Santiago de Cuba and Cabo Cruz.

³ The exact point at which Columbus reached Jamaica cannot be determined, but it was probably somewhere near Galina Point.

⁴ The estimated area of Jamaica is 4,200 square miles: that of Sicily, 9,700 square miles. This passage of Bernáldez suggests that the persistent exaggeration of distances, found in the letters of Columbus, may to some extent be explained by the casual use of the word 'legua', and that 'millas' is actually meant, and that the distances given should be divided by four, or by three. In the latter case, the estimate given in the letter to Santangel, for example, of the coastline of Española would be approximately accurate.

⁵ Clearly the 'herald' is the Indian already mentioned.

with its crew. He gave them clothes and many other things which they held in great regard, and accorded them permission to depart. He then anchored at a place which he named *Santa Gloria*,¹ on account of the extreme beauty of its glorious country, in comparison with which the gardens of Valencia are nothing, nor is there anything to compare with it elsewhere, and so it is in all the island. And they slept there that night. Next day, at dawn, they went to seek for a sheltered harbour, where they might be able to careen and repair the ships. And having gone four leagues to the westward, they found a very remarkable harbour and the admiral sent the boat to examine its entrance.² And two canoes with many people came out to it and shot many darts at it, but they fled as soon as they found opposition and that not so quickly that they suffered no punishment. The admiral entered the harbour and anchored, and so many Indians came down to it that they covered the land, and all were painted a thousand colours, but the majority black, and all were naked as is their custom. They wore feathers of various kinds on the head and had the breast and stomach covered with palm leaves. They made the greatest howling in the world and shot darts, although they were out of range. And in the ships, there was need of water and wood, and it was further necessary to repair the vessels. The admiral saw that it was not reasonable to allow them to be so daring without chastisement, in order that on another occasion they might not be so bold. He assembled all three boats, since the caravels could not proceed and reach the place where they were owing to the shallows, and that they might become acquainted with the arms of Castile, they approached close to them in the boats and fired at them with crossbows and thus pricked them well, so that they became frightened. They landed, continuing to shoot at them, and as the Indians saw that the Castilians were speaking with them, they all took to flight, men and women, so that not one was to be found in all that neighbourhood. And a dog which they let loose from a ship chased them and bit them, and did them great damage, for a dog is the equal of ten men against the Indians.³ Next day, before

¹ St. Ann's Bay.

canoas se aseguró y bino á él con la jente, é dióles vestidos é otras muchas cosas que ellos tubieron en gran precio, é dióles lizencia que se fuesen, y él fué á surjir á un lugar que puso nombre 'Santa Gloria', por la extrema hermosura de su gloriosa tierra, porque ninguna comparazón tienen á ella las guertas de Balencia, ni de otra parte, y esto es en toda la isla. y durmieron allí aquella noche. otro día, en amaneciendo, fueron á buscar puerto cerrado para despalar y adovar los navíos, y, andando al poniente quatro leguas, hallaron un singularísimo puerto, y el almirante enbió la barca á ber la entrada, y salieron á ella dos canoas con mucha jente y le tiraron muchas baras, enpero luego uieron desque bieron resistencia, y no tan presto que no recibieron castigo, y el almirante entró en el puerto y surjió, y binieron tantos Indios sobre él que cubrían la tierra, y todos teñidos de mill colores y la mayor parte de negro, y todos desnudos, á su uso, y traían plumajes en la caveça, de diversas maneras, y traían el pecho y el biente cubierto con ojas de palma, dando la mayor grito del mundo, y tirando baras, aunque no alcançaban; y en los navios tenían necesidad de agua y de leña, allende de adobar los navíos; y el almirante bió que no hera rraçón dejarlos en aquella osadía sin pena, porque otra bez no se atrebiesen ansí. arrimó todas tres barcas, por(que) las carabelas no podían andar y llegar adonde ellos estaban por el poco ondo, y porque conociesen las armas de Castilla allegaron cerca d'ellos con las varcas, y tiráronles con las ballestas, y desque los picaron bien, y començaron de cojer miedo, saltaron en tierra ellos despeldando tiros, y, como los Indios bieron que los Castellanos decían á ellos, dieron todos buelta á huir, hombres y mujeres, que no pararon ninguno en toda la comarca, é un perro que soltaron de un navio los seguía é mordía, é los fiço gran daño, que un perro bale para contra los Indios como diez hombres. el día siguiente, antes

² The mouth of the Rio Bueno.

³ This is the first mention of the use of dogs to chase Indians; afterwards, they were generally employed by the Spaniards and trained for the purpose. For the story of Becerrillo, the most famous of these dogs, see Las Casas, ii. 55. For his hardly less famous son, Leonzico, see Oviedo, xxix. 3; he belonged to Balboa.

sunrise, six men of those Indians came to the shore, calling and saying to the admiral that all those caciques asked him not to go away, because they desired to see him and to bring him bread and fish and fruits. And the admiral was much pleased with this embassy, and they protested their friendship and assured him of his safety, and the caciques and many Indians came to him, and they brought to them many provisions with which the people were much refreshed, and they were very abundant all the days that they were there, and the Indians were very content with the things which the admiral gave to them. And, having repaired the ships and rested the people, they departed thence.

The admiral with his three caravels left Jamaica, and navigated thirty-four leagues westward, as far as the Golfo de Buen Tiempo.¹ And there they met with contrary winds as they proceeded farther along the coast of the said island of Jamaica. Of that island, the general character was well-known and observed, that there was in it no gold nor any metal, although for the rest it was a very paradise and to be regarded as more than gold.²

They turned the contrary wind to their favour and proceeded to the mainland of Juana, with the intention of following its coast, where they had left it, in order to know certainly whether it was Tierra Firme. And they arrived at a province which they call 'Macaca',³ which is very beautiful, and they came to anchor at a very large village, the cacique of which already knew of the admiral, and of the caravels, before they came on this voyage. For on the first occasion when the admiral went to discover, they had arrived off that coast, so that all the caciques of that land knew of it, and all that land and the islands were amazed at so new a thing and at the ships, and all said that they were people from the sky, despite the fact that he had not sailed along that coast, but the other coast to the north. And having arrived there, the admiral sent presents to the said cacique of the things which they there held to be of great price. And the cacique sent

¹ Montego Bay.

² During his first voyage, Columbus heard much of a somewhat mysterious island, 'Bebeque' or 'Beneque', which was said by the natives to lie to the south.

del sol salido, bolvieron seis hombres de aquellos Indios á la playa, llamando y diziendo al almirante que aquellos caciques todos le rogavan que no se fuese, que los querían ber é traer pan é pescado, é frutas, é el almirante le plugo mucho de la enbajada, é hicieron su amistançia é seguro, é binieron los caciques é muchos Indios á él, é truxéronles muchos mantenimientos con que refrescó mucho la jente, é estubieron muy abundosos de todo todos los días que allí estubieron, y los Indios quedaron muy contentos con las cosas que el almirante les dió; é, adobados los navíos é descansada la jente, partieron de allí.

Partió el almirante con sus tres caravelas de Jamaica, é navegó .34. leguas al poniente, fasta el golfo de Buen Tiempo, é allí obieron los bientos contrarios para seguir la costa adelante de la dicha isla de Jamaica, de la qual su calidad hera bien conocida y bista, que no avía en ella oro ni metal ninguno, aunque de lo otro era como un paraíso, y por más que oro tenuta, hicieron de biento contrario bueno y bolvieron á la tierra firme de la Juana con propósito de seguir la costa de ella que avían dejado por saver cierto si era tierra firme; é fueron á parar á una provincia que llaman 'Macaca', que es muy fermosa, y fueron á surjir á una población muy grande, el cacique de la qual ya conocía á el almirante y las caravelas de antes que fuesen á esta jornada, que allegaron por aquella costa las idas de la primera bez que el almirante fué á descubrir, que todos los caciques de aquella tierra lo supieron, y fué toda aquella tierra y islas alborotadas de tan nueva cosa é navios, é todos decían que heran jente del cielo, no enbargante que él no avía navegado aquella costa, salvo la otra del setentrión; y, llegados allí, el almirante enbió presentes al dicho cacique de las cosas que ellos tenían allá en mucho precio; y el cacique les enbió buen refresco, y á decir

and to be very rich in gold. Pinzón claimed to have visited it, and to have found that there was no gold in it (cp. *Journal*, 13, 14 Nov., 5, 11, 14, 16 Dec. 1492, and 6 Jan. 1493). Las Casas (i. 94) says that this island was Jamaica, and it is possible that the visit of Columbus to the island at this time was made with the intention of discovering whether or no Jamaica was such an island as that of which the Indians had told him.

* On the south coast of Cuba, part of the later province of Oriente. Columbus arrived at Cabo de Cruz (Ferdinand Columbus, c. 55; Las Casas, i. 95).

them good refreshment, and sent to say how they knew of them and of the admiral by hearsay, and knew the father of Simon, an Indian whom the admiral had taken to Castile and had given to prince Don Juan.¹ And the admiral landed and asked the said cacique and the Indians of that place whether this was Tierra Firme or an island. And he like all the rest replied to him that there was an infinity of land of which no one had seen the end, although it was an island.

Although the people were very gentle and devoid of evil thoughts, there is a very great difference between these people of this land of Juana and the others of all the neighbouring islands. And the same is true of the birds and of all other things, for all are of better appearance and more gentle.²

Next day they left that place and navigated to the northward, bearing north-east, following the coast of the land. At the hour of vespers,³ they saw in the distance that the coast turned westward and steered that course in order to take the shortest way, leaving the land on the right hand. Next day, at sunrise, they looked from the top of the mainmast and saw the sea full of islands to all the four winds, and all green and full of trees, the loveliest sight that eyes have seen. And the admiral wished to go to the south and to leave these islands on the right hand, but, remembering that he had read that all that sea is so entirely filled with islands, and that John Mandeville says that in the Indies there are more than five thousand islands,⁴ he resolved to go forward, and to follow and not to lose sight of the mainland of Juana and to see certainly whether it was an island or no. And the farther he went, the more islands they discovered, and on one day he caused to be noted a hundred and sixty-four islands.⁵ And for navigating among them, God constantly gave him fair weather, so that the ships so ran through those seas that they seemed to be flying. And on Whitsunday, 1494, they arrived off the coast of the mainland at a place which was uninhabited, and that not on account of an intemperate climate nor on account of the barrenness of the land, and at a great grove of palms which seemed to touch the sky, there on the sea-

¹ The six Indians whom Columbus brought back with him after his first voyage were baptized, the king, queen, and prince acting as sponsors. One

como lo(s) conocían, y al almirante por oídas, y conocían á su padre de Simón, un Indio que el almirante avía traído á Castilla é dado al príncipe don Juan; y el almirante decindió en tierra, y preguntó al dicho cacique y á los Indios de aquel lugar, si aquella hera tierra firme ó isla; y él con todos los otros le respondieron que hera tierra infinita de que nadie avía bisto el cavo, aunque era isla. aunque hera jente muy mansa, y desbiada de malos pensamientos, ay diferençia en gran manera de esta jente d'esta tierra Juana á las otras de todas las islas comarcanas, y eso mesmo ay en las aves, y en las otras cosas todas, que todas son de mejor condición y más mansas. otro día partieron de allí é navegaron al setentríon, declinando al norueste, siguiendo la costa de la tierra. á oras de vísperas bieron de lejos que aquella costa bolvíá al poniente y tomaron aquel camino por atajar, dejando la tierra á mano derecha. otro día, de salir del sol, miraron de encima del mástel, y vieron la mar llena de islas á todos quatro bientos; y todas berdes y llenas de árboles, la cosa más fermosa que ojos bieron, y el almirante quesiera pasar al austro y dejar estas yslas á la mano derecha, mas, acordándose aver leído que toda aquella mar es ansí toda llena de yslas, y Juan de Mandavilla dize que en las Indias ay más de cinco mill yslas, determinó de andar adelante, é seguir é no dexar la vista de la tierra firme de la Juana y ber lo cierto si era isla ó no, y quanto más andava más islas descubrían, y día se fizo á notar ciento y sesenta y quatro islas, y el tienpo para navegar entre ellas sienpre se le dió Dios bueno, que corrían los navios por aquellos mares que parecían que bolavan, y allegaron el dia de Pasque del Espíritu Santo de .1494. á parar á la costa de la tierra firme á un lugar

Indian was given to prince Juan as a servant, but did not long survive. 'Piety,' adds Las Casas (i. 81), 'compels us to believe that he was the first of all his race to enter Heaven.'

² Oviedo (xvii. 4) denies that there was any essential difference between the natives of Cuba and those of Española; except that the former had certain marriage customs not found among the latter. He notes certain differences in the fauna (*ibid.*, and xvii. 5); the reptiles were larger. Las Casas (iii. 22-3) is enthusiastic about the natural productions of the island; according to him, the inhabitants were worthy of their land.

³ At sundown.

⁴ 'In and about Ind' (Mandeville, c. 18).

⁵ Ferdinand Columbus (c. 55) and Las Casas (i. 95) both give one hundred and sixty as the number.

shore. And there in the ground beneath it, there sprang forth two fountains of water, so abundant that at the outlet each was the size of a very large orange, and this water spouted up with force. When the tide was coming in, it was so cold and such and so sweet, that no better could be found in the world, and this cold is not harsh, as that of other waters, so as to injure the stomach, but very healthy. And all rested there on the grass by those fountains, and amid the scent of the flowers, which there was marvellous, and to the sweet singing of the birds, which were very many and very tuneful, and under the shade of those palms, so tall and so lovely, that it was a wonder to see it all. There no people appeared, but there was some indication that people had been there, since the branches of the palms had been cut.

From that place, the admiral entered a boat and went in it and with the other boats to see a river, a league to the east of that spot. And they found the water in it so hot that a man could scarcely bear his hand in it. And they went up it for two leagues without finding people or houses, and always the land was of the same beauty and the fields very green and full of an infinity of fruits, as red as scarlet, and everywhere there was the perfume of flowers and the singing of birds, very sweet. All this they saw and experienced in as many islands as they reached there. And as there were so many islands that they could not give a separate name to each one, he gave to them all generally as a name, *el Jardín de la Reina*.¹

And on the following day, when the admiral was very anxious to have speech, there came a canoe to hunt fish. And so they call it, hunting, because they hunt some fish with others. For they have certain fish, fastened at the tail with cords, and these fish are the shape of congers and have a large mouth, all full of suckers just like the cuttlefish, and they are very daring, as ferrets are here. And when they are thrown into the water, they go to fasten themselves on some fish; of these they do not leave hold in the water, but only when they are pulled out, which is before their prey is dead. And

¹ A collection of islets and rocks off the south coast of Cuba, the Cayas de las Leguas.

despoblado, y no por destenperança del cielo ni esterilidad de la tierra, y en un grande palmar de palmas que parecian que llegavan al cielo, allí en orilla de la mar, y salían en la tierra dos ojos de agua debajo d'ella, tan gordos que en el ahujero cupiera una muy gorda naranja, y benia esta agua en alto con ípetu. quando la marea era del creciente, hera tan fría y tal y tan dulce, que en el mundo (no) se podía aver mejor, y este frior no es salvaje, como otros, que daña el estómago, salvo sanísimo; y descansaron todos allí en las yervas de aquellas fuentes, y al olor de las flores, que allí se sentia maravilloso, y al dulçor del cantar de los pajaritos, tantos heran y tan suaves, y á las sombras de aquellas palmas tan grandes y tan fermosas, que hera maravilla ver lo uno y lo otro. allí no parecía jente ninguna, enpero señal avía de andar jente por allí que avía ramas de palmas cortadas. de allí el almirante entró en una barca y fué con ella y con las otras á ver un río al lebante de allí una legua, y hallaron el agua d'él tan caliente que escasamente se sufría la mano en ella; é andubieron por él ariva dos leguas sin hallar gente ni casas, y sienpre la tierra hera en aquella hermosura y los campos muy berdes y llenos de infinitas ubas y tan coloradas como escarlatas, y en toda parte por allí avía el olor de las flores y el cantar de los pájaros muy suave, lo qual todo bieron y sintieron en quantas islas por allí llegaron, y porque heran tantas que no se podían en singular nombrar cada una, púsoles en todas en general por nombre 'el Jardín de la reina'. y el día siguiente, estando el almirante en mucho desco de aver lengua, bino una canoa á caça de pezes, que así le llamaban ellos caza, que cazan con unos pezes otros, que traen atados unos peces por la cola con unos cordeles, y aquellos peces son de hechura de congrios y tienen la boca larga, toda llena de sosas, así como de pulpo, y son muy osados, como acá los urones, é, lançándolos en el agua, ellos ban á pegarse á qualquier peçe; d'estos en el agua non los desapegarán fasta que lo saquen fuera, antes morirá, y es peçe muy ligero, y desde que se apegan tian por el cordel muy luengo en que lo traen atado, y sacan cada vez uno, é tómanlo en llegando á la cumbre del agua, así que aquellos caçadores andavan muy desviados de las caravelas, y el almirante inbió las barcas armadas y con arte que no les

these fish are very active, and as soon as they have fixed on anything, the Indians draw them in by a very long cord to which they are fastened, securing one at a time and taking it by bringing the hunting fish to the surface of the water.¹

So, as those hunters passed at some distance from the caravels, the admiral sent out armed boats and with care that they should not flee to land, and when they came up with them, all those hunters talked to them like gentle lambs without guile, as if they had seen them every day of their lives. They came alongside the boats, for they had one of these fish fastened at the bottom on a large turtle, and they waited to get it into the canoe, which they did. And they took the canoe and the men, with four turtles, and each one of them three *cordos* long, and brought them to the ships to the admiral. And there those men gave him information concerning all that land and the islands, and concerning their cacique, who was staying very near there and who had sent them to hunt. And they asked the admiral to go there and said that they would make a great feast for him and they gave him all four turtles. And he gave them many things of those which he carried with him, with which they were very content.²

And he asked them how it was, whether that land was very great, and they answered that towards the west it had no end, and they said that to the south and west all that sea was full of islands. He gave them leave to depart; and they asked him how he was called, and they said the name of their cacique, and they returned to their employment of fishing.

The admiral departed from that place, making his way among those islands by the most navigable channels, steering a westerly course, not keeping very far from the mainland. And after having gone many leagues with a fair wind, he found a great island, and at the end of it there was a large village.³ And although the caravels were sailing well, they anchored there and they landed, but they found not a single person, for all had fled and abandoned the place. It was

¹ This method of fishing, which is said to have been general on the coasts of Cuba, Jamaica and Española, is also described by Peter Martyr (i. 3), and in much greater detail by Oviedo (xiii. 9). The hunting fish, a kind of lamprey,

fuyesen á tierra, y, llegados á ellos, los hablaron todos aquellos caçadores como corderos mansos sin malicia, como si toda su vida los ubiera visto, que se detubiesen con las varcas, porque tenían uno d'estos peçes pegado en fondo á una grande tortuga, fasta que lo ubiesen recojido adentro en la canoa, y así lo hicieron, y después tomaron la canoa, y á ellos con quatro tortugas, y cada uno tenía tres cordos en luengo, é los truxeron á los navíos al almirante; y allí aquellos le dieron nueva de toda aquella tierra y yslas, y de su cacique, que estava allí muy cerca, que los avía enviado á caçar, y rogaron al almirante que se fuese allá, y que le harían gran fiesta, y diéronle todas quatro tortugas, y él les dió muchas cosas de las que llevaba, con que fueron muy contentos.

y preguntóles que si aquella tierra hera muy grande, y respondieron que al poniente no tenía cavo, y dijeron que toda aquella mar al austro é poniente hera llena de islas. dióles licencia; y ellos le preguntaron cómo se llama, y ellos dijeron el nombre de su cacique, y bolviéronse á su exercicio de pescar.

Partió el almirante de allí por entre aquellas islas por los canales más navegables, siguiendo al poniente, no se desbiando de tierra firme, y después de con buen tiempo aver andado muchas leguas, falló una isla grande, y al cavo d'ella una gran población; y aunque las carabelas llevaban buen tienpo, surjieron allí, y fueron á tierra; mas no hallaron persona alguna, que todos fuyeron y dejaron el lugar. creyóse ser

was called 'guaciamo' by the natives and 'reverso' by the Spaniards. It was used to catch manatis, as well as turtles and various large fish. Turtles, caught in this way, were drawn ashore or into a canoe; manatis were harpooned. The hunting fish had a buoy attached to the cord by which it was held, in order that the moment when it had fixed on its prey might be known. The reversos were taken when young and kept in salt water, being fed until they were large enough to go hunting. Before putting them in the water, the Indians talked encouragingly to them and when the reversos had caught anything, they were in the same way induced to leave hold of their prey by persuasive words and effusive thanks; Oviedo remarks that the natives were so frivolous as to believe that the fish understood all that they said to them.

² This incident is also described by Las Casas (i. 95) and by Ferdinand Columbus (c. 55).

³ Columbus called this island 'Santa María' (cp. Ferd. Columbus, c. 56; Las Casas, i. 95). The island was, perhaps, one of the islands of the Jardín de la Reina, but more probably Cayo Largo, farther to the west.

believed that they were a people supporting themselves by fishing; they found there traces of innumerable turtles which were on that shore. There they found forty dogs all together, which were not large or very ugly. They did not bark; it seemed that they were reared and fattened on fish. They learned that the Indians ate them, and that they are as tasty as kids are here in Castile, for some Castilians tried them.¹ There those Indians had many tame herons, and many other birds.² The admiral ordered that they should take nothing from them, and left that place with his ships.

And immediately they found another island, larger than that,³ and they did not examine it, but shaped their course directly for some very lofty mountains which they saw on the mainland and which were fourteen leagues from there.⁴ And they found there a large village, and the cacique and all the inhabitants were very friendly and very courteous, and there they gave very good refreshment to the admiral and to his people, of bread and fruits and water. And the admiral asked them if that land extended much farther to the west, and the cacique answered, as did other old men, his contemporaries, for he was an aged man, that the land was very great and that he had never heard that it had an end, but that farther on he might learn more from the people of Magón,⁵ with which province they marched.

On the following day, they steered westwards, always following the coast of the land, and they went many leagues continually among larger islands and not so close to one another as at first. And they arrived at a very extensive and lofty sierra, which stretched very far inland, so much so that it was impossible to see the end of it.⁶ And on the side of the sea, there were innumerable villages, from which there came immediately to the ships innumerable people with fruit, bread and water, and spun cotton, and rabbits, and pigeons, and a thousand other marvels and birds of other kinds which are not found here. They came singing with joy, believing that the people and the ships came from the heavens; and although the Indian interpreter, whom the

¹ Cp. *supra*, p. 42, and note 4.

gente que se governava de pescados; allí hallaron infinitas cosas de tortugas que tenían por aquella plaia; allí allaron todos juntos quarenta perros, no grandes ni muy feos, no ladravan, parecía estar criados á pescado y cevados. supieron como los Indios los comían, y que tienen tan buen sabor como acá cabritos en Castilla, proque algunos Castellanos los probaron. tenían allí aquellos Indios muchas garçotas manças, é otras muchas aves. el almirante mandó que no les tomasen ninguna cosa, y partióse de allí con sus navíos, y luego hallaron otra isla mayor que aquella, y no curaron d'ella, mas endereçaron á unas montañas que bieron, muy altas, de la tierra firme, que estaban de allí catorce leguas, y allí hallaron una gran población, y el cacique y todos los avitadores de muy buena conversación, y de muy buen trato, y allí dieron muy buen refresco al almirante y á su jente de pan, y frutas y agua; y preguntóles el almirante si aquella tierra se andava mucho adelante al poniente, y respondió el cacique que con otros biejos de su tienpo, ca era honbre viejo, que aquella tierra que era grandísima y jamás oió decir que tubiese cavo, mas que adelante sabría más de la jente de Magón, de la qual provincia ellos estaban comarcanos.

Navegaron el día siguiente al poniente, siguiendo sienpre la costa de la tierra, y andubieron muchas leguas sienpre por islas más grandes, y no tan espesas como primero; y llegaron á una sierra muy grande y muy alta, que andava mucho adentro en la tierra, tanto que no se pudo ber el fin de ella; y de la parte de la mar avía poblaciones infinitas, de las quales luego binieron á los navíos jente infinita con fruta, pan y agua, y algodón hilado, y conejos, y palomas, y de otras mill maravillas, y de aves de otras maneras que no ay acá, cantando por fiesta, creyendo que aquella jente y navíos benían del cielo; y aunque el Indio intérprete que llebava el almirante les decía que heran jente de Castilla, creían que Castilla hera

² For the tame herons, see Oviedo (xiv. 8) and Las Casas (iii. 22): for the birds of Cuba and the neighbouring islands generally, see Las Casas (*loc. cit.*).

³ If the former island be identified with Cayo Largo, this 'larger island' will be the Isla de Pinos (for which, cp. *infra*, p. 150).

⁴ The Cordilleras de los Organos.

⁵ Cp. *infra*, p. 138.

⁶ The mountain system of Cuba which, in the east, is near the coast on the south, trends in a north-westerly direction.

admiral carried with him, told them that they were men of Castile, they believed that Castile was Heaven, and that the king and queen, sovereigns of those ships, whose these men were, dwelt in the sky.

That province is called Ornofay.¹ They arrived there one evening and had passed through shallows and there could not find bottom, and the breeze from the land drove them out to sea. And they were there all one night lying to with sails furled, and it seemed to them to be no more than one hour of toil, owing to the most delicious perfume wafted from the land and the singing of the birds and of the Indians, which was very wonderful and comforting.

There they told the admiral that beyond there lay Magón, where all the people had tails, like beasts or small animals, and that for this reason they would find them clothed.² This was not so, but it seems that among them it is believed from hearsay and the foolish among them think that it is so in their simplicity, and I believe that the intelligent did not credit it, since it seems that it was first told as a jest, in mockery of those who went clothed. So John Mandeville, in the seventy-fourth chapter of his book,³ says that in the Indies, in the province of Moré, all go naked as when they were born, and that they make a jest of those who go clothed. And he says that they are a people who do not believe in God, that He made Adam and Eve our parents, Who made them naked, and they say that none should feel shame of that which is natural. And so those of this province of Ornofay, as they all go naked, men and women, make a mock of those of whom they have heard say that they go clothed, and the admiral knew it to be a jest, so that if, where they said it to be so, some go clothed, yet they have not tails, as they declared.

There they also told the admiral that farther on there were innumerable islands and little depth of water, and that the end of that land was very far away, and so much so that in forty moons it would not be possible for him to reach the end. And they spoke according to the speed of their canoes, which is very small, for a caravel will go farther in one day than they in seven.

¹ The modern district of Camaguey, on the south coast of the island.

el cielo, y que el rey y la reyna señores de aquellos navíos, cuya hera aquella jente, estaban en el cielo. llámase aquella provincia 'Ornophay'; llegaron allí una tarde, y avia(n) andado en poca agua, y allá no pudieron allar ondo, y el biento de la tierra los echava fuera, y estuvieron allí toda una noche á la cuerda pairando, que no les pareció una ora de mano por el suavísimo olor que de la tierra benía, y el cantar de los pájaros y de los Indios, que hera muy maravilloso y contentable; allí dixerón al almirante que adelante de allí hera Magón, donde todas las jentes tenían rabo, como las bestias ó alimañas, y que á esta causa los hallarían bestidos, lo qual no hera así, mas parece que entre ellos (a)y este crédito de oídas, y los sinples d'ellos lo creen ser así con su sinpleça, y los discretos creo yo que no lo creerán, porque parece que ello fué dicho primeramente por burla, haciendo escarnio de los que andan bestidos, como dice Juan de Mandavilla en el .74. capítulo de su libro, que en las Indias en la provincia de la Moré todos andan desnudos como nacieron, y que hacen burla de los que andan bestidos; y dice que es jente que no creen en Dios, que hiço á Adán y á Eba nuestros padres, el qual los hiço desnudos, y dicen que de lo que es natural ninguno deve aber bergüenza; é así lo(s) d'esta provincia de Ornofay, como ellos todos andan desnudos, hombres y mujeres, facen escarnio de los que oyen decir que andan bestidos, y el almirante supo ser burla, que si algunos donde ellos decían andan bestidos, tampoco tienen ravos, como ellos dixerón. (dixerón) también allí al almirante que adelante avía islas innumerables y poco hondo, y que el fin de aquella tierra hera muy lejos, é tanto que en quarenta lunas no le podría llegar al cavo, y ellos fablaban según el andar de sus canoas, que es muy poco, que una caravela andaré más en un día, que ellos en siete.

Partió el almirante de Ornofay el día siguiente con buen biento con sus caravelas, é cargó de belas y andubo muy grande camino fasta que entró en una mar blanca todo de un golpe, é pasó muchos bajos antes de llegar á ella, la qual mar hera blanca como leche y espesa como el agua en que los çurra-dores adovan los cueros; y luego les faltó el agua, y quedaron

² Cp. *supra*, p. 12, end note 3.

³ Mandeville, c. 74.

The admiral with his caravels set out from Ornofay on the following day with a fair wind. And he set all sail and made very good progress, until he suddenly entered a white sea, having passed through many shallows before he reached it. This sea was white as milk and as thick as the water in which tanners treat their skins. And afterwards water failed them and they found themselves in two fathoms' depth.¹ The wind was strongly abaft and they were in a channel, where it would have been very dangerous to turn back, nor was it possible for the ships to anchor, since they could not lie anchored to the wind and there was no depth for them, since the anchor always dragged on the bottom. And so they went through these channels behind these islands for ten leagues; as far as an island where they found two fathoms and a half of water and space for the caravels.² There they anchored and they were in a state of extreme distress, considering the abandonment of the undertaking and how they were little able to return to that place from which they had set out. But Our Lord, Who ever succours men of good will when they are afflicted, gave them courage and put it into the heart of the admiral to proceed farther. And on the following day he sent a small caravel to the shore of that sea near there, to discover whether on the mainland there was to be found fresh water of which all the ships had great need. She returned with the report that on the shore of the land there was very deep mud³ and in the seas beyond it such thick vegetation that a cat could not pass through it. There were in that place very many islands⁴ which were more crowded together than in the Jardín already mentioned and which were so thickly wooded everywhere down to the seashore that they seemed to be walls. And beyond these woods there was very high land, and many and very green mountains, and on them there seemed to be much smoke and great fires. The admiral resolved to go forward and navigated through those channels among those islands, which, as has been said, were more crowded together than in the Jardín de la Reina, and he made his way onwards until they arrived at a very low headland, to which the admiral gave the name *Punta del Serafin*.⁵

¹ Columbus was in the Golfo de Batábano. All the sea between Cuba and the

en dos braças de fondo, y el biento les acudió mucho, é estando en una canal muy peligrosa para bolver atrás, ni para surjir con los navíos, porque no podrían birar sobre el ancla la proa al biento, ni avía ondo para ellos porque sienpre andavan rastreando la ancla por el suelo, é andubieron así por estas canales de dentro d'estas islas diez leguas hasta una isla donde hallaron dos brazas é un codo de agua, y largura para estar las caravelas. allí surjieron y estuvieron con muy grande pena, pensando dexar la enpresa, y que no harían poco en poder bolver adonde avían partido; mas Nuestro Señor, que sienpre socorre á los honbres humillados de buena voluntad, les puso esfuerço y puso en coraçón al almirante que siguiese adelante, y el día siguiente enbió una caravela pequeña al fondo de aquella mar allí cerca, á ver sí fallaría agua dulce en la tierra firme, de que tenían todos los navíos mucha necesidad. bolvió con la respuesta que á la orilla de la tierra hera el lodo muy ondo y estava dentro en la mar el arboleda tan espesa, que no entraría por ella un gatto; avía por allí tantas islas que heran más espesas que en el Jardín ya dicho, y tantas arboledas en derredor á la orilla de la mar, que parecían muros, y juntos con aquellas arboledas avía tierra alta, y muchas montañas y muy berdes, y en ellas parecían muchas umadas y grandes fuegos. el almirante determinó ir adelante, y navegó por aquellas canales entre aquellas islas, las quales, como dicho es, heran más espesas que en la Jardín de la reyna, y navegó fasta llegaron á una punta muy baja de la tierra, á la qual el almirante puso nombre la 'punta del Serafín'; allí obieron muchos trabajos, que muchas bezes se hallaron con los navíos en secos; y dentro d'esta punta la tierra bajava al oriente, y se descubrían al septentrión montañas muy altas lejos d'esta punta y entremedias limpio de islas, que todas quedavan al austro y al poniente. obieron

Isla de Pinos is very shallow. Las Casas (i. 96) says that the sea was first green and white and then white, and finally black as ink, and that it was sometimes very shallow and at other times very deep, and that the sailors were terrified at the changes in its character.

² The islands constitute the Archipelago de los Canarreos.

³ The coast of the Zapata peninsula: the Gran cienega occidental de Zapata.

⁴ These islands were the Islas de Mangles.

⁵ Punta Gorda, the western point of the Zapata Peninsula.

There they met with great difficulties, for many times they found the ships aground. Beyond this point, the land to the eastward was low and to the north, at a distance from that point, very high mountains appeared and in the interval it was clear of islands, since they all lay to the south and west.¹ There they had a fair wind and found three fathoms' depth of water, and the admiral determined to steer a course towards those mountains, at which he arrived on the following day. And they proceeded to anchor at a very lovely and very large palm grove, where they found springs of water, very sweet and very good, and evidence that people had been there.

While they were there, furnishing the ships with wood and water, a crossbowman from the caravels happened to go ashore with his crossbow to hunt, and when he had gone a short distance, he came upon a band of thirty Indians, one of whom was dressed in a white tunic down to his feet. He came upon them so suddenly that he thought that the one so dressed was a friar of La Trinidad who was walking there in the field. And afterwards there came towards him two others with white tunics which they wore down to the knees, and in colour they were as fair as men of Castile. Then he took fright and shouted and made off, fleeing to the sea. And he saw that, while the others remained where they were, the one in the full tunic came after him, calling to him, and he never dared to wait. So he came to the ships in flight and when the admiral learned it, he sent there to discover who those people were, and those who went found no one, and they believed that the one with the full tunic must have been the cacique of the others.²

On the following day the admiral sent twenty-five men, well armed, who were to go eight or ten leagues into the interior of the land, until they should find people. And when they had gone a quarter of a league, they found a plain which extended from west to east and away from the coast, and as they did not know the route, they proposed to cross the plain, and they were quite unable to do so owing to the abundant and tangled vegetation, on account of which they

¹ The Cordillera de los Organos lie to the north of the Golfo de Batábano,

allí el biento bueno y allí hallaron tres braças de agua de ondo, y el almirante determinó de tomar el camino de aquellas montañas, á las quales llegó otro día siguiente, y fueron á surgir á un palmar muy fermoso y muy grande, adonde hallaron fuentes de agua dulce y muy buena, y señal que allí avía estado jente.

Acaeciό allí que estando forneciendo los navíos de leña é agua, saliό un ballestero de las caravelas á caza por la tierra con su ballesta, é, alejado un poco, se hallό con obra de treinta Indíos, y el uno d'ellos era bestido de una túnica blanca hasta los pies; y se hallό tan súpito sobre ellos, que pensό por aquel bestido que hera un fraile de la Trinidad que iva allí en la campaña, y después vinieron á él otros dos con túnicas blancas, que les llegaban abajo de las rodillas, los quales heran tan blancos como hombres de Castilla en color; entonces obo miedo, é diό boçes, é bolvió, huyendo, á la mar, y vido que los otros se estaban quedos y el de la túnica cumplida benía tras d'el llamándolo, y él nunca osό esperar; y así fuyendo se vino á los navíos, y el almirante, desde lo supo, enbió allá por saver qué jente hera, é quando fueron, no hallaron á ninguno, y creyeron que aquel de la túnica cumplida sería el cacique d'ellos.

El día siguiente enviό el almirante .25. hombres bien armados, que aduviesen ocho ó diez leguas por la tierra adentro, hasta allar jente, y, andando un quarto de legua, hallaron una bega que andaba de poniente á lebante é luengo de la costa, y por no saver el camino, quisieron travesar la vega, y nunca pudieron con yerva tanta y tan entretejida, que nunca pudieron andar, y bolviéronse cansados como si ubieran andado veinte leguas, y dixerón que por allí hera imposible poder andar la tierra, que no avía camino ni bereda.

where a large expanse of open water, free from islands, is to be found. As Bernáldez reports, the islands lie south and west.

² Las Casas (i. 95) and Ferdinand Columbus (c. 56), who place this incident in the island of Santa María, relate it somewhat differently, but they agree in essentials with the description of the country given by Bernáldez in the following passage. As that description accords with the character of the mainland of Cuba in that district, it seems to be probable that the incident occurred on the mainland.

could make no progress. And they came back as exhausted as if they had gone twenty leagues, and they said that it was impossible to traverse the land, as there was neither a road nor a path.

Next day others went along the shore and they found tracks of very large wild animals with five claws, an alarming thing, and they supposed them to be griffons, and tracks of other animals which they judged to be lions.¹ So they returned. There they found many vines and very large, laden with unripe fruit which covered all those trees and it was a wonderful sight. The admiral took a basket full of that fruit and of cuttings of the vines and of the white sand of the sea to exhibit and to send to the king and queen. There were also in that place many aromatic fruits, as in the other places already mentioned. There were also there cranes, twice as large as those of Castile.

The admiral, seeing that he had left Punta del Serafín, where the land was low to the eastward, and that he had crossed to the mountains in the north, navigated from there to the east along the same coast, until he saw that the one shore and the other joined and made continuous dry land. They went back again towards the west, and although the ships laboured and the people were very weary, the admiral thought to navigate to the west to some mountains which he had seen thirty-five leagues distant from the place where they had taken in water, and when they had gone nine leagues, they reached shore and took the cacique of that place. And he, being ignorant and as one who had never stirred from those mountains, told them that the sea was very deep and clear² to the north and for many days' journey. They weighed anchor and went on their journey very joyful, thinking that it would be as he had said to them, and having gone a certain number of leagues, they found themselves involved among many islands and in very shallow water, so that they found no channel which would allow them to proceed farther. And at the end of a day and a half, they had to drag the ships overland in scarcely a fathom of water through a very narrow

¹ Griffons were to be expected (cp. *Mandeville*, c. 29). The 'lions' were not less imaginary.

otra día fueron otros á el luengo de la playa y hallaron rastro de bestias grandísimas de cinco uñas, cosa espantable, é juzgaban que fuesen grifos, é de otras bestias, que juzgaban fuesen leones. también se bolvieron atrás. allí hallaron muchas parras y muy grandes, cargadas de agraz, que cubrían todos aquellos árboles, que hera maravilla de ber. tomó el almirante de aquel agraz una espuerta llena, é de los troços de las parras, é de la tierra blanca de la mar para mostrar, é para enbiar al rey é la reyna; también allí avía muchas aromáticas frutas, como en los otros lugares susodichos; también avía allí grullas mayores dos beces que las de acá de Castilla.

Bisto el almirante que avía dejado la punta del Serafín, donde la tierra bajava al oriente y avía travesado á las montañas al setentrion, navegó de allí al oriente por la misma costa, hasta que bido que la una costa é la otra se juntavan y hacían seco; bolvieron atrás otra vez al poniente, y aunque andavan los navíos y jente muy cansada, pensó el almirante navegar al poniente á unas montañas que avía bisto lejos treinta y cinco leguas de donde avían tomado el agua, y andando las nueve leguas, hallaron una playa é tomaron el cacique d'ella, el qual como inorante y persona que no avía salido de aquellas montañas, que les dixo que hera la mar muy onda y baja al setentrion é muy gran número de hornadas, levantaron las áncoras, é siguieron su camino muy alegres, pensando que sería como él les avía dicho, y andando ciertas leguas, se hallaron embarcados entre muchas islas, y en muy poco ondo, de manera ques no hallavan canal que los consintiese pasar adelante, é á cavo de un día y medio por una canal muy angosta é baja por fuerças de anclas é cavestral ovieron de pasar los navíos por la tierra en seco casi una braça, hasta aver andado bien dos leguas, adonde hallaron dos bracas y media de agua, en que navegaban dos navíos, y andando más adelante hallaron tres brazas. allí binieron muchas canoas á los navíos, y las jentes de ellas decían que las jentes de aquellas montañas dezían tenían (un rey de grande estado;

² The translation is conjectural, but from the context it would appear that the Indian said that the sea was deep and free from islands.

and shallow channel by means of anchors and capstan, until they had gone a good two leagues. There they found two and a half fathoms of water, in which two ships floated, and when they had gone farther on, they found three fathoms.¹

Many canoes came to the ships there, and the people in them said that the people of those mountains had a king of great estate, and it seemed that they held in wonder the character and the magnificence of his land and great estate, saying that it contained innumerable provinces and that they called him 'holy' and that he wore a white tunic which trailed upon the ground.

And so they followed that course continually along the shore of that sea, always with three fathoms' depth of water, and when they had sailed four days and when the mountains, which stretched away far to the east, had been passed, they always found the seashore marshy as before and such dense vegetation along it, as has been said, that it was impossible to pass through it. And having with the ships reached a bay,² where the land again trended eastward, they saw some very high mountains there where that coast formed a headland, twenty leagues distant from them. The admiral determined to go there, as the sea was not open towards the north, and here it was of the very greatest depth as the cacique had said. He said also that in the direction in which the admiral proposed to go, no end of the land would be found in fifty moons, and that so he had heard it said. They navigated within many islands and at the end of two days and nights they reached the mountains which they had seen, and they found that they were as serrated a range as that of la Aurea, as the island of Corsica.

They rounded it completely and they could never find an entry by which to go to the land behind, for the shore was as full of mud and of thickly growing trees as was the other which has been mentioned, and the dwellings of the natives on the land behind were very large and numerous. They were there on that coast for seven days, seeking fresh water, of which they had need, and they found it on land on the eastern side among some very fine palm groves. And there they

¹ The channel, through which the caravels were dragged, was perhaps the

é ellos parecía lo tenían) en maravilla el modo é summa de su rejión é grande estado, diciendo que tenía infinitas provincias, y que le llamaban santo, y que traía túnica blanca que le arastrava por el suelo, y así siguieron aquel camino siempre por la costa de aquella mar, sienpre con tres brazas de agua de hondo, y después de navegado quatro días y pasadas las montañas, que quedavan mucho al oriente, y sienpre allaron la costa de la mar así anegada, y arboledas espesas, cerca d'ella, como dicho es, que hera imposible entrar por ellas; y, estando metidos con los navíos en un seno por donde otra vez la tierra bolvíá al oriente, bieron unas montañas muy altas allí adonde aquella tierra hacía cavo, lejos de ellos veinte leguas. determinó el almirante ir á ella, pues la mar no coxía al setentríon, y hera de muy grandísimo ondo, como el cacique avía dicho y dixo que por allí por donde el almirante quería ir que en cinquenta lunas no hallaría cavo, y que así lo avía él oydo decir. navegaron por de dentro de muchas islas, y al cavo de dos días con sus noches llegaron á las montañas que avían visto; y hallaron que hera un chererojo tan grande como el de la Aurea, como la isla de Córcega. cercáronla toda, y nunca pudieron hallar entrada para ir á la tierra adentro, porque hera así la tierra llena de lodo é de árboles espesos, como lo otro que dicho es, y las aumadas de jente heran en la tierra adentro muy grandes é muchas. estubieron allí por aquella costa siete días buscando agua dulce, de que tenían neçesidad, la qual hallaron en la tierra de parte de oriente en unos palmares muy lindos, y allí allaron nácares y grandísimas perlas; bieron que allí abría buenas pesquerías si las continuasen. después que tomaron agua y leña, navegaron al austro siguiendo la costa de la tierra, y después al poniente, siguiendo siempre la costa de la tierra firme fasta que los llevaba al

Cayamos Channel, where the average depth of water is about one and a half fathoms. A little farther west, the channels between the islands are still shallower. The mean draught of a caravel has been estimated at about nine feet, with a maximum draught of ten feet and a minimum of six feet.

² Probably near Punta de Salinas.

found mother of pearl and very large pearls; they saw that there would be good fisheries if they persevered.¹

After they had taken in water and wood, they navigated to the south following the coast of the land, and then to the west, always following the coast of the mainland until it bore them to the south-west and it seemed that they had to follow that course for a great number of days' journey. And to the south they saw all the sea full of islands after having proceeded with great difficulty from the point from which they had set out.

And here the ships were very distressed owing to having grounded many times in the shallows, and the ropes and tackle were wasted, and the greater part of the provisions was much injured, especially the biscuit, on account of the quantity of water which the vessels had shipped. And all the people were very exhausted and troubled about supplies of food and doubtful whether the prevailing winds would not be against them on their return journey. They had gone up to that point from cape Alfaeto a thousand two hundred and eighty-eight miles, which are three hundred and twenty-two leagues, in the course of which they had discovered very many islands, as has been said, and Tierra Firme.²

The admiral then resolved to make the return voyage by another route and not by that by which he had gone, and to return by way of Jaime,³ to which the admiral had given the name of Santiago, and to end by circumnavigating all the southern part which was left for them to go round. And so they set out on their return, expecting to pass within those islands which were there, among which they never found a channel. And they were compelled to go back by an arm of the sea by which they had navigated as far as Punta del Serafin to the islands where they had first anchored in the white sea.

Having set out on their return voyage, after they had gone a day's journey beyond the houses of the above-mentioned cacique, one day before the sun was up, they saw rising from the sea in the opposite direction from that of the land more than a million and a half cormorants, all together, and they

¹ This hope was not well founded, and although there were pearl-fisheries off

surueste y parecía que avían de llebar por aquella via grande número de jornadas, y al austro bieron toda la mar llena de yslas después de aver andado gran pieza de donde avían partido. y aquí los navíos estaban muy desconcertados por las muchas dadas en lo bajo, y las cuerdas y aparejos gastados, y la mayor parte de los mantenimientos muy perdidos, en especial el bizcocho, por la mucha agua que hacían los navíos, y toda la jente estava muy cansada y temerosos de mantenimientos, y dudando que la saçón de los bientos á la buelta les podrían ser adbersos. avían andado hasta allí desde el cavo de Alfaeto mill é ducientas é ochenta é ocho millas, que son .322. leguas, en que avían descubierto muy muchas islas, según dicho es, y la tierra firme.

Entonces accordó el almirante dar la buelta por otro camino, y no por donde avían ydo, y bolver por Jaime, el qual nombre de Santiago el almirante le avía puesto, y acabar de redondear toda la parte del austro que les avía quedado por andar, y así dieron la buelta pensando pasar dentro d'estas islas que allí estaban, en las quales nunca hallaron canal, y les fué forçado bolver atrás por un braço de mar por donde avían navegado hasta la punta del Serafín á las islas donde primero avían surjido en la mar blanca.

Biniendo de buelta, después que obieron pasado las casas del cacique susodicho una hornada, un día antes que el sol saliese, bieron venir de mar en fuera al camino de la tierra más de quento y medio de cuerbos marinos todos juntos, é lo obieron por maravilla de tanta multitud de cuerbos; y el día siguiente binieron á los navíos tantas mariposas, que escurecían el ayre del cielo, y duraron ansí hasta la noche, que las destruyó una grande agua que llovió, y truenos con ella. tanvién desde donde dejaron la tierra donde decían que

the Cuban coast, they never attained the importance of those of Cubagua and Margarite.

* Although the greatest length of Cuba is only 750 miles, the extreme indentation of the shore gives the island a total coast line of nearly six thousand miles.

* Jamaica. The island is not elsewhere so named, and it would seem to be more probable that the appearance of the name here is due to an error in writing, than that it is some unconscious revelation, on the part of Columbus, of his Catalan origin (cp. Ulloa, *Xristo-Ferens Colom*, p. 98).

were amazed at so great a multitude of cormorants. And on the following day, there came to the ships so many butterflies that they darkened the face of the sky, and so they remained until night, with the result that a great rain which fell, and thunder with it, destroyed them. Moreover, from the point where they left the land, in which they said that the holy king was, in order to go to el Teroneso, to which they gave the name *San Juan Evangelista*,¹ certainly throughout that voyage they saw that there were many turtles and very large. But in those twenty leagues, they saw very many more, for the sea was all thick with them, and they were of the very largest, so numerous that it seemed that the ships would run aground on them and were as if bathing in them. The Indians value them highly and regard them as very good to eat and as very healthy and savoury.²

They departed from there and navigated through an arm of the sea, white, as is all the rest there, and of little depth, and when they had gone a few leagues, they arrived at the end of the many islands, where they had anchored for the first time in the white sea. And it was a marvel of Our Lord to bring it to pass that they came there and a miracle, beyond the knowledge and wit of man. And thence they came as far as the province of Ornofay, with no less peril than before, and there they anchored in a river³ and supplied the ships with water and wood, preparatory to steering to the south and not to return by the way by which they had come, and to leave the Jardín de la Reina on the left hand. And so they proceeded, and they were not able to omit visiting many islands which they had not hitherto seen. Here, as has been said, the land is mountainous and very fertile, and the people are notably gentle, and there is great abundance of fruits and of animal food, of all of which they gave them a very great part. The fruits were very sweet and aromatic. There they brought them innumerable birds, parrots and other birds, and the majority of them were pigeons and very large, and as savoury as partridges here in Castile. And they had their crops full of flowers which smelt sweeter than orange blossom.

There the admiral had mass said, and he caused a very large

¹ Isla de Pinos (cp. Las Casas, i. 96).

estaba el rey santo para ir al Teroneso á quien de 'San Juan Ebanjelista' pusieron el nombre, bien que en todo el biaje bieron que avía muchas tortugas é muy grandes, enpero muy muchas más bieron en estas veinte leguas, ca la mar hera toda quajada de ellas, é muy grandísimas, atantas, que parecían que los navíos se querían encallar en ellas, y así ruiján entre ellas. tiénenlas los Indios en gran precio y por muy buen manjar, y por muy sanas y sabrosas.

Partieron de allí y navegaron por un braço de mar blanco, como es todo lo otro de por allí, y poco ondo, y, andadas pocas leguas, llegaron al cavo de las muchas islas donde avían surjido la primera bez en la mar blanca, que fué maravilla de Nuestro Señor aportar á benir allí y milagro, más que no por saver (ni) ingenio de hombre; y dende binieron fasta la provincia de Ornofay con no menos peligro del pasado, y allí surjeron en un río, é fornecieron los navíos de agua é leña para navegar al austro é no bolver por donde avían ido, y dejar el Jardín de la reina á la mano izquierda, y ansí binieron, é no se pudieron escusar de comunicar con muchas islas que hasta entonces no avían visto. aquí, como es dicho, es la tierra montañosa y fertilísima, y jente mansa en gran manera, y muy abundosa de frutas, y de biandas, que de todo les dieron muy gran parte. heran frutas suavísimas y aromáticas; allí les trujeron infinitas aves, papagayos, y de otras aves, é las más d'ellas heran palomas y muy grandes, y tan sabrosas como perdiçes de acá de Castilla, y tenían el papo lleno de flores, que olían más que açahar de los naranjos. allí hiço el almirante decir misa, y hiço plantar una cruz de un gran madero, así como acostumbrava fazer en todos los otros cavos donde llegavan y le parecía que convenía. hera domingo quando al almirante dijeron misa, y él decendió en tierra, y el cacique de allí hera hombre muy onrrado, y señor de mucha jente é familia. quando vido al almirante decendido de la barca en tierra, le tomó de la mano, y otro Indio de más de ochenta años que benía con él le tomó de la otra mano,

² Las Casas (i. 95) also declares that the ships had difficulty in navigating among the turtles.

³ Perhaps the Rio Cauto.

wooden cross to be set up, as he was accustomed to do on all the other headlands where they came and as appeared to him to be right.¹ It was Sunday when they said mass for the admiral, and he landed. And the cacique of that place was a man very honoured and lord of a great people and household. When he saw the admiral come on shore from the boat, he took him by the hand, and another Indian, of more than eighty years of age, who came with him, took him by the other hand, making great festivity for him. And that old man wore round his neck a string of beads, made from a stone like marble, which they greatly value there, and he carried a small basket of apples in his hand and these he gave at once to the admiral as a present directly he landed from the boat. The cacique and the old man and all the others, without any embarrassment, went naked as when they were born, as they go in all parts of the land discovered by the admiral Columbus.

And so they went hand in hand, and all the other Indians behind them, until the admiral came to the place where he was to offer up prayer and to hear mass, and where he had ordered preparation for that purpose to be made. And when the admiral had ended his prayer, the old Indian, in a very pleasing and confident manner, made a speech there and said that he had heard how the admiral was going about and seeking out all the islands and the mainland of those parts, and that they knew that he had been on the mainland there. And he told the admiral that he should not become vainglorious, because it chanced that all the people feared him, since he was mortal like other men. And he began by words and signs, illustrating from his own person how all men were born naked and had an immortal soul, and how for the ill of each member, it was the soul that suffered pain, and how at the moment of death men felt very great anguish at parting from the body, and how they went to the king of the sky or to the depth of the earth, according to the good or evil which they had done or wrought in the world. And since he learned from the admiral that he was pleased to hear him, he expanded his speech more, using such signs that the admiral understood all.

And the admiral answered him by the medium of the Indian

haciéndole mucha fiesta, y traía aquel biejo un ramal de cuentas de piedra mármol al pescuezo, las quales ellos tienen allá en gran precio, un cestillo de mançanas en la mano, las quales luego dió al almirante, así como decindió de la barca en presente; y el cacique, y el biejo y todos los otros andavan desnudos como nacieron, sin ningún enpacho, así como andan en todas aquellas partes de la tierra descubierta por el almirante Colón; é así por las manos fueron y todos los otros Indios en pos de ellos fasta donde el almirante fué á facer su oración é oír misa, donde avía mandado aparejar para ello. é después que el almirante acavó su oración, el biejo Indio con muy buen semblante y osadía hizo allí raconamiento y dixo que él avía savido como el almirante corría y buscava todas las islas y tierra firme de aquellas partes, y que supiesen que allí estava en la tierra firme de allá, y dixo al almirante que no tomase banagloria, puesto caso que toda la jente le obiese miedo, porque él hera mortal como los otros hombres, y començó por palabras y señas figurando en su persona como todos los hombres nacieron desnudos y tenían el ánima ynmortal, y que del mal de cada miembro el ánima hera la que se dolía y como al tienpo de la muerte del despedimiento del cuerpo sentían muy gran pena, y que iban al rey del çielo, ó al abismo de la tierra, según el bien ó mal que avían fecho ó obrado en el mundo; y porque él conoció del almirante que avía placer de lo oír, él se alargava más en el raçonamiento con tales señas que todo lo entendía el almirante; y el almirante le respondió por intercesión del Indio intérprete que traía, que avía venido á Castilla, el qual entendía bien la lengua castellana y la pronunciava, y hera muy buen hombre y de muy buen ingenio, y respondió que él no avía fecho mal á nunguna persona ni hera benido por facer mal á los buenos, salvo á los malos, y que antes bienes y merçedes á los buenos u mucha ourra, y que esto hera lo que los señores suyos el rey don Fernando y la reyna doña Isabel, muy grandes reyes de España, le avían mandado, y el Yndio respondió, muy maravillado, al intérprete, diciendo: ‘¿cómo,

¹ If the river be the Rio Canto, the headland would be the promontory at its mouth.

interpreter whom he carried with him and who had come to Castile and who understood the Castilian language well and talked it, and who was a very good man and of very good intelligence. And he replied that he had not done ill of any person nor had he come to do ill to the good, but only to the evil, and rather to give presents and rewards to the well doers and much honour, and that this was that which his sovereigns, the king Don Ferdinand and the queen Doña Isabella, the very great rulers of Spain, had commanded him.

And the Indian, greatly marvelling, replied to the interpreter, saying: 'How? Has this admiral another lord, and does he yield obedience?' And the Indian interpreter said: 'To the king and to the queen of Castile, who are the greatest sovereigns in the world.' And forthwith he recounted to the cacique and to the old man and to all the other Indians the things which he had seen in Castile and the marvels of Spain, and told them of the great cities and fortresses and churches, and of the people and horses and animals, and of the great nobility and wealth of the sovereigns and great lords, and of the kinds of food, and of the festivals and tournaments which he had seen, and of bull-fighting, and of that which he had learned of the wars. And all this he told very well and in such a way that the old man and the others were satisfied and greatly rejoiced to know it, and they passed it on, the one to the other.

And the old man said that he desired to go to see such great things and he was himself determined to go with the admiral, had not his wife and sons opposed it and wept, and for this cause, from his sense of duty towards them, with much sorrow he refrained. And from there the admiral took another, a young man, whom he carried off from the land without any question being raised. This man, with the other cacique whom he had with him and whom he had seized, he sent to the king and queen, after he had come to Española from this voyage.¹

All those peoples of the islands and of the mainland there, although they appear to be savages and go naked, yet, according to the admiral and to those who were with him on this voyage, appear to be quite rational and of acute intelli-

¹ This incident is recorded very shortly by Ferdinand Columbus (c. 57); at

este almirante otro señor tiene y obedece?' y el intérprete indio dijo: 'al rey y á la reyna de Castilla, que son los mayores señores del mundo'; y de aquí les contó al cacique y al biejo, y á todos los otros Indios las cosas que él avía visto en Castilla y las maravillas de España, y de las grandes çiudades y fortalezas, y iglesias, y jentes, y cavallos, y alimañas, y de la grande nobleça y riqueza de los reyes y grandes señores, y de los mantenimientos, y de las fiestas y justas que avía bisto, y del correr de los toros, y de las guerras lo que avía savido, y todo se lo rrecontó muy bien y en forma que el biejo y los demás se sosegaron y olgaron mucho por saber; é lo comunicaban los unos á los otros, y el biejo dixo que él quería benir á ber tales cosas, é determinaba de se benir con el almirante, salvo por el inpedimiento de su mujer y hijos que lloravan, y por esto por piedad de ellos lo dexó con mucha pena, y el almirante tomó otro mancebo de allí, que truxo sin escándalo de la tierra, el qual con el otro cacique que traía, que avía tomado, envió al rey y á la reina, después d'él benido del biaje en la Española.

Todas aquellas jentes isleñas y de la tierra firme de allá, aunque parecen bestiales y andan desnudos, según el almirante y los que con él fueron este biaje, les pareció ser bien raçonables y de agudos injenios, los quales todos olgaban y guelgan mucho de saver cosas de nuebas, como hacen acá los hombres que descan saver todas las cosas, que aquello no nace sino de vizez y agudo injenio, y son aquellas jentes muy obedientes y muy leales á sus caciques, que son sus reyes é señores, é los tienen en muy gran quenta é honrra; y luego dondequiera que las caravelas llegavan hacían saver qualesquier Indios que allí estubiesen ó llegasen el nombre de su cacique, y preguntavan por el nombre del cacique de las caravelas para replicarlo entre ellos, y el uno con el otro lo replicaban porque no se les olvidase, y después preguntavan cómo llamaban á los navíos, y sí benían del çielo, ó de dónde benían, y aunque les decían que hera jente de Castilla, ellos

more length by Las Casas (i. 96), and at still greater length by Peter Martyr (i. 3). Martyr professes to report the *ipsissima verba* of the cacique and of Columbus, and adds one or two typical touches of his own, thereby winning the approval of Las Casas (*loc. cit.*).

gence. And they all are pleased and are greatly delighted to learn new things, as here those men are who wish to know about everything, and that can only arise from a lively and active mind. And those peoples are very obedient and very loyal to their caciques,¹ who are their kings and lords, and hold them in very great account and honour. And immediately, at whatever point the caravels arrived, the Indians, who were there or who came there, made known the name of their cacique, and they asked for the name of the cacique of the caravels in order to repeat it among themselves, and the one told it to the other that they might not forget it. And afterwards they asked what the ships were called and whether they came from the heavens, and whence they did come. And although they told them that they were people of Castile, they thought that Castile was in the heavens, for they have no letters, and they know nothing of law or of history, nor do they know what it means to read, nor have they reading or writing, and for this cause they are so ignorant. And they said that the people of Magón went clothed because they had tails, in order to conceal that disgrace, and among themselves they regard it as a shame to go clothed, as has been said.

The land is so fertile that it may be renowned for this among all those islands and lands of those seas, since, even if there were many more people and even if they were a hundred times more numerous, the supplies of food would suffice for them. It may well be that in the interior of the land there are other forms of government and other differences and manners and peoples, and things which may be no less strange, which on this voyage they could not see or know. The admiral bade farewell to that cacique of Ornofay and to that honoured old man, his favourite or relative, with much friendship and with many protestations.

The admiral departed from the province of Ornofay and from the *Rio de las Misas*, which name he gave, and they navigated to the south in order to leave on the left hand the Jardín de la Reina, which consists of many green and lovely islands, on account of the perilous voyage which they had experienced before on the outward journey. They arrived at

¹ To the Spaniards, it appeared that the caciques tyrannized over the natives.

pensaban que Castilla hera en el cielo, porque ellos no tienen ningunas letras, ni saben de ley, ni de historias, ni saben qué cosa es leer, ni leyenda, ni escriptura, y por esto están tan inorantes; é ellos dicen que los de Magón andan bestidos porque tienen ravo, por cobijar aquella fealdad, é tienen por injuria entre ellos andar bestidos, como dicho es. la tierra es tan fértil en lo que se puede conocer por todas aquellas islas y tierras de aquellas mares, que, aunque fuesen muchas más jentes y fuesen cien beçes otros tantos, les sobrarían los mantenimientos. bien puede aver en la tierra adentro otros rejimientos é otras diferencias é modos é jentes é cosas estrañas, que no puede ser menos, las quales d'este biaje no se pudieron ver ni saver. despidióse el almirante de aquel cacique, y de aquel biejo onrrado, su privado ó pariente, de Ornofay, con mucha amistanza é con muchas obligaciones.

Partió el almirante de la provincia de Ornafay del 'Río de las misas', que puso nombre, navegaron al austro por dejar el Jardín de la reyna, que heran muchas yslas berdes y hermosas, á la mano yzquierda, por el peligro de navegar que primero á la ida avían pasado, binieron á tener á la provincia de Macaca por causa de los bientos que le resistieron, y allí en toda la provincia los recibieron muy bien, y allí en un golfo muy grande adonde puso el almirante 'Buen tiempo' por nombre, allí navegaron al poniente, hasta que llegaron al cavo de la isla, y dende al austro, hasta que llegaron á la tierra bojía al oriente, y así al cavo de ciertos días binieron al monte Cristalino y de allí á la punta del Farol y á la baía que es más al lebante once leguas, donde hace fin la isla sobredicha. allí obieron ciertos días de bientos contrarios. los marineros tienen que el común navegar de una caravela en un día son docientos millas de quatro en legua, que son en un día natural cinquenta leguas, en un día grande setenta é dos leguas. d'estas les acaecieron al almirante y á su jente en este biaje hartas hornadas, según ellos contaban y escribió el almirante en el libro que d'ello hizo, y no parezca á mara-

and at a comparatively early date, Ferdinand and Isabella gave instructions that measures should be taken to prevent the oppression of the Indians by their own chiefs (cp. *Doc. Inéd.* (1^a serie), 31, p. 161).

the province of Macaca, owing to the winds which were contrary, and there in the whole province they were very well received.¹

And there, across a very wide bay, to which the admiral gave the name *Buen Tiempo*, they navigated westward until they reached the end of the island,² and thence to the south, until they came to a point where the land jutted out to the east. And so at the end of some days they came to Monte Cristalino³ and thence to Punta del Farol,⁴ and to the bay which is eleven leagues more to the east, where is the end of the above-mentioned island. There, for some days, they had contrary winds.

Sailors hold that the ordinary going of a caravel in a day is two hundred miles, so that, at the rate of four miles to a league, in a normal day they make fifty, in a long day seventy-two leagues. This was achieved on many days by the admiral and his men during this voyage, as they reckoned and as the admiral wrote in the book which he made concerning it.⁵ And it is not a thing beyond belief that in navigating it is possible to lay the course exactly; on the contrary, it is proved to be very true. For on many occasions a ship returns to an island from which she has set out and that not with the same, but with contrary and adverse wind and weather. Herein lies the skill of the master and salvation in time of tempest. No one is regarded as a good pilot and master who, although he has to pass from one land to another far distant without seeing any sign of other land, makes an error of ten leagues, even if the crossing be one of a thousand leagues, unless it be that the violence of the storm overpowers him and deprives him of the use of his skill.

So, navigating in a southerly direction, they came to anchor in a bay, in the neighbourhood of which there were many villages.⁶ And a cacique of a very large village, which was on a height, came to the ships and brought to them very good supplies of food. And the admiral gave to him and to his men of the things which he had, and they were pleased with them. And the cacique asked whence they came and what the

¹ Columbus proceeded eastwards along the coast of Cuba as far as Cabo de Santa Cruz (Las Casas, i. 97), where he found that owing to contrary winds, he

villa que navegando se pueda arbitriar el camino en cierto; mas antes se prueba por muy berdadero, porque por muchas veces se buelve el navío á la isla otra de donde partió, y no con el mesmo tiempo y biento, salvo con lo contrario y adberso. aquí consiste el saber del maestro y el remediarse al tiempo de la tormenta. nin se tiene por buen piloto é maestro aquel que, aunque aya de pasar de una tierra en otra muy lejos, sin ber señal de otra tierra alguna, que yerre diez leguas, aunque en tránsito sea de mil leguas, salvo si la fuerça de la tormenta le fuerça é priva el usar del ingenio. así que, navegando ellos á la partida del austro, fueron á surjir una tarde á una baia, adonde allí en aquella comarca avía muchas poblaciones, y bino un cacique de una muy grande población, que está en un alto, á los navíos, y trújoles muy buen refresco, y el almirante les dió á él y á los suyos de las cosas que él tenía é les agrada- van, y el cacique preguntó de dónde benían y cómo llamaban al almirante, y el almirante respondió que él era basallo de los grandes y muy onrrados reyes el rey y reyna de Castilla, sus señores, los quales lo avían enviado en aquellas partes á saver é descubrir aquellas tierras y honrrar mucho á los buenos y obedientes y destruir los malos; y esto fué por intercesión

could not sail towards Española. He therefore stood across to Jamaica, which he reached near Montego Bay.

² Bernáldez does not make it clear that Columbus had left the coast of Cuba and crossed to Jamaica; 'Buen Tiempo' is Montego Bay in the latter island.

³ Probably Portland Point, where the land is high.

⁴ Las Casas (i. 97) says that this point was the most easterly of the island, which identifies it with the modern Morant Point. But if the account in Bernáldez be accurate, it was not the extreme east of the island and should be identified rather with Yallah Point, the bay mentioned immediately afterwards being then probably Port Morant.

⁵ This 'book' was presumably one of the 'writings' which Columbus left with Bernáldez, and was possibly an account of this voyage, since there is evidence that the story of the exploration of Cuba and Jamaica at this time is not drawn from the log-book of which Ferdinand Columbus and Las Casas made use.

⁶ This may be any one of the bays on the southern coast of Jamaica, but may, perhaps, be most probably identified with Portland Bight. Las Casas (i. 97) mentions that Columbus was especially impressed by one bay in which were seven islets, and near which there was very high land. This bay can be almost certainly identified with Portland Bight, and since Las Casas says further that the country near was very populous, it seems to be likely that it is the bay mentioned by Bernáldez.

admiral was called, and the admiral replied that he was a vassal of the great and most honoured sovereigns, the king and queen of Castile, his lords, who had sent him into those parts to learn about and to discover those lands and to do great honour to the good and obedient and to destroy the evil doers. This reply was made through the medium of the Indian interpreter who spoke. At it, the said cacique was much pleased and inquired of the said Indian at very great length concerning things here. And he described many things in detail at which the cacique and the other Indians were greatly amazed and were very delighted. They remained there until nightfall and then took leave of the admiral.

And next day the admiral departed from there. He was already under sail with a light wind when the cacique came with three canoes and overtook the admiral. He came with so much ceremony that some description of his pomp must not be omitted. One of the canoes was as large as a large *fusta* and brightly painted. In her, he came in person, with his wife and two daughters, of whom one was a very lovely girl of some eighteen years, entirely nude, as they are wont to be there, and very modest; the other was younger. He had with him also two sons, callow youths,¹ and five brothers, and other dependants, and all the others must undoubtedly have been his vassals. In his canoe he carried as a herald a man who stood alone at the bow, wearing a loose cloak of red feathers, shaped like a coat of arms, and on his head a large plume, which looked very well. And in his hand he carried a white banner with no design on it. Two or three men had their faces painted in colours in the same way, and each one of them wore on his head a large plume, in the shape of a helmet, and on his forehead a round tablet as large as a plate. And each one of them was painted in the same manner and colours, so that there was no more difference there than in their plumes. Each held in his hand a *juguete*,² upon which they played. There were two other men also painted, but in a different way, and these carried two wooden trumpets, with elaborate carvings of birds and other conceits; they were of very black wood of excellent quality. Each one of them

¹ The absence of any further reference to the sons, while the appearance of

del Indio intérprete que fablava. de lo qual el dicho cacique se olgó mucho y preguntó muy por estenso al dicho Indio de las cosas de acá, y él se las recontó mucho por estenso, de lo qual el cacique y los otros Indios muy maravillados se olgaron mucho y estubieron allí hasta la noche é se dispidieron del almirante. y otro día partió el almirante de allí. ya que iba á la bela con poco biento, bino el cacique con tres canoas, y alcanço al almirante, el qual benía tan concertado, que no es de dejar de escribir la forma de su estado. la una de las canoas hera muy grande como una grande fusta y muy pintada. allí benía su persona, y la muger é dos fijas, la una de hasta diez y ocho años, muy hermosa, desnuda del todo, como allá acostumbran, muy onesta; la otra hera menor; y dos hijos machos, y cinco hermanos, y otros criados; y los otros todos devían de ser sus basallos. traía él en su canoa un hombre como alferez. este sólo benía en pie á la proa de la canoa con un sayo de plumas coloradas de echura de cota de armas, y en la caveça traía un grande plumaje. que parecía muy bien, y traía en la mano una bandera blanca sin señal alguna. dos ó tres hombres benían con las caras pintadas de colores de una mesma manera y cada uno traía en la caveca un gran plumaje de echura de zelada, y en la frente una tableta redonda tan grande como un platto y pintadas así la una como la otra de una mesma obra y color, que no avía diferencia así como en los plumajes. traían estos en la mano un juguete con que tañían. avía otros dos hombres así pintados en otra forma, é estos traían dos tronpetas de palo, muy labradas de pájaros é otras sutileças; el leño de que heran era muy negro, fino. cada uno d'estos traía un muy lindo sombrero de plumas berdes muy espesas y de muy sutil obra. otros seis traían sombreros de plumas blancas y benían todos juntos en guarda de las cosas del cacique. el cacique traía al pescueço unas joias de alambre de una ysla que es en aquella comarca, que se llama 'guaní', que es muy fino é tanto que parece oro de ocho quilates. hera de echura

the father, mother and elder daughter is described, suggests that the word 'machos' is here used in an uncomplimentary sense. But it may mean merely that they were robust.

² Some kind of small or childish musical instrument.

wore a very handsome hat of green feathers, very close together and very ingeniously worked. Six others wore hats of white feathers, and these were all together on guard over the belongings of the cacique. The cacique wore round his neck some ornaments of *alanbre*,¹ which is called '*guaní*', from an island which is in that neighbourhood, and which is very fine and of such a character that it seems to be gold of eight carats. It was the shape of a fleur de lis, as large as a plate. He wore it round his neck with a string of large beads of marble, which they also value highly, and on his head he wore a garland of small stones, green and red, arranged in order, and intermingled with some larger white stones, producing a pleasing effect. And he also wore a large ornament hung over his forehead, and from his ears two large disks of gold were suspended by some little strings of very small green stones. Although he was naked, he wore a girdle, of the same workmanship as the garland, and all the rest of his body was exposed. His wife was likewise adorned, naked and exposed, except that she had one single part of her person covered with a little piece of cotton, no bigger than an orange leaf. On her arms, about the armpits, she wore a roll of cotton, made like the upper part of the sleeves of old-fashioned French doublets. She wore two others, also made of cotton, like these and larger, on each leg below the knee, as *ajorcas*.² The elder and more lovely daughter was completely nude. She only wore round her waist a single string of stones, very black and small, from which hung something shaped like an ivy leaf, made of green and red stones fastened on woven cotton. The large canoes came between the other two and further, slightly in advance of them.

And as soon as this cacique came alongside the ship, he began to give things from his store to the masters and to each one of the crew. It was morning, and the admiral was praying, so that he did not so soon know of the presents or the determination with which this cacique had come. Presently the cacique came on board the caravel with all his people, and when the admiral appeared, he had already sent away his

¹ Perhaps copper, the ordinary meaning of the word '*alanbre*'. But Oviedo

de una flor de lis, tamaño como un platto. traíala al pescueço con un sartal de cuentas gordas de piedra mármol, que también tienen en gran precio, y en la caveça traía una guirnalda de piedras menudas, verdes y coloradas, puestas en orden, y entremedias algunas blancas, mayores, adonde bien parecían, y traía más una joia grande colgada sobre la frente, y á las orejas le colgavan dos grandes tabletas de oro con unas sartitas de cuentas berdes, más menudas. traía un cinto, aunque andava desnudo, ceñido de la misma obra de la guirnalda, y todo lo otro del cuerpo descubierto; y asimismo su mujer benía adornada, desnuda, descubierta, salvo un solo lugar de su miembro, que de una cosilla no mayor que una oja de naranjo de algodón traía tapado. traía en los braços junto con el sobaco un bulto de algodón echo en semejança de los baraones de los jubones antiguos de los Franceses. traía otros dos como aquellos y más grandes, en cada pierna el suyo, como ajorcas, también de algodón, abajo de las rodillas. la hija mayor y más ermosa toda andava desnuda. un solo cordón de piedras muy negras y menudas solamente traía ceñido; del qual colgava una (cosa de) echura de oja de yedra, de piedras verdes y coloradas pegadas sobre algodón texido. la canoa grande benía entre las otras dos, é más, con una poca de bentaja adelante; y luego como llegó este cacique al bordo de navío, començó de dar á los maestros é jente cosas de su cámara á cada uno. era de mañana, y el almirante estava reçando y no bido tan aýna las dádibas ni la determinación de la benida d'este cacique, el qual luego entró en la caravela con toda su jente, y quando el almirante salió ya tenía enbiado los basallos que bolviesen las canoas á tierra, y iban ya lejos, y luego que bido al almirante se fué á él con cara muy alegre, diciendo: 'amigo, io tengo determinado dejar la tierra y irme contigo y ber el rey ó la reyna y el príncipe su hijo, los mayores señores del mundo, los quales tienen tanto poder, que an sojuz-

says that the natives of the Amazon district used 'guaní' for purposes of personal decoration, and explains guaní as being gold of inferior quality.

² The large rings worn by Moorish women round their arms or ankles.

servants, so that the canoes were on their way back to land and had already gone a considerable distance.

And directly he saw the admiral, he went up to him with a very joyous expression, saying: 'Friend, I have resolved to leave the land and to go myself with you and to behold the king and the queen and their son, the prince, the greatest sovereigns in the world, who have so much power that they have brought under their sway so many lands through you who obey them and by their command go about subduing all this world, as I have learned from these Indians whom you carry with you. For, in every quarter, the nations so greatly fear you that it is marvellous, and as for the Caribs, who are a people without number and very fierce, you have destroyed their canoes and houses and have taken their women and sons, and those who did not flee, you have slain. I know how in all the islands round about, which is a vast world of innumerable people, they tremble before you and are in great fear, and that you are able to do to them great injury and ill, if they do not obey the king of Castile, your lord, for already you know the peoples of these islands and their weakness, and you are acquainted with the land. Accordingly, before you take from me my land and dominion, I desire to go with my household in your ships with you to see the great king and queen, your sovereigns, and to see the richest and most opulent land in the world, wherein they dwell, and to behold the wonders of Castile, which are many, as your Indian has told me.'

And the admiral, having compassion on him and on his daughter and his sons and his wife, seeing his innocence and good will, withstood him and told him that he received him as a vassal of the king of Spain and of the queen, and that for the present he should remain where he was, since much was still left for him to discover, and that when he returned there would be time to fulfil his desire. And they plighted friendship and so he was obliged to remain with his people and household.¹

The admiral sailed thence to the south and to the east through those seas, among other islands, a multitude of islands, inhabited by those same naked people, according to the admiral's account of the matter.² Of these, that I may

¹ This incident is not found in Las Casas or in Ferdinand Columbus.

gado acá tantas tierras por ti que les obedeces y bas por su mandado todo este mundo sojuzgando, como e savido d'estos Indios que contigo traes, que en todo cavo están las jentes de ti tan temerosos que es maravilla, y á los Caribes que es jente ynumerable y muy brava les as destruído las canoas é casas é tomado las mujeres é fijos é muertos d'ellos los que no huían. yo sé que en todas las yslas d'esta comarca, que es infinito mundo de gente innumerable, te temen y an gran miedo, y los puedes hacer mucho daño y mal, si no obedecen al rey de Castilla, tu señor, pues ya conoces las jentes d'estas yslas y su flaqueça y saves la tierra. pues, antes que me tomes mi tierra é señorío, yo me quiero yr contigo con mi casa en tus navíos á ver á los grandes rey é reyna tus señores y á ver la tierra más rica y abundosa del mundo, de donde ellos están, y á ver las maravillas de Castilla, que son muchas, según tu Indio me a dicho.' y el almirante, aviendo compasión d'él y de su fija y de sus fijos y de su muger, se lo estorbó, biendo su inocencia y sana boluntad, y le dixo que él lo rrecivía por basallo del rey de España y de la reyna, y que por entonces que se quedase, que aun le quedava mucho por descubrir, y que tiempo abía de otra buelta para cumplir su deseo; y hicieron su amistad, y ansí se obo de quedar con su jente é casa.

El almirante navegó dende al austro é al oriente por aquellas mares entre otras islas, muchas islas pobladas de aquellas mesmas jentes desnudas, según escrivió d'ello el almirante, de las quales, por no hacer tan larga escriptura, dexo de escribir, y basta esto, porque toda la jente hera como la susodicha.

² From Jamaica Columbus sailed directly to cape San Miguel in Española, proceeded along the south coast of that island, and then, by way of the island of Mona (which Las Casas says was so named by Columbus after Anglesey) to Isabella, which he reached 29 Sept. 1494 (Las Casas, i. 97-9). Bernáldez is not accurate in saying that at this time Columbus sailed among many other islands.

not make my book too long, I abstain from writing, and that which has been written is enough, for all the people were as those who have been already mentioned. And when he had returned to Española, whence he had set out, he went forth among the islands of the Caribs, near the part where he had gone on his second voyage.¹

¹ It would seem that Bernáldez here misunderstands some expression of

é quando bolvió para la Española, de donde avía partido, bino á salir por entre las yslas de los Carives facia por donde había ido el segundo viaje.

Columbus; he perhaps mistook an intention for an act. Las Casas (i. 99) says that in a letter to the sovereigns, Columbus declared that he had wished to proceed to 'destroy'—or, as Las Casas suggests, to 'discover'—the islands of the cannibals, but 'so great had been his labours and watchings, night and day, and so continuous, with no hour of rest', and so severe was his own illness at the time, that he could not carry out his wish.

INDEX

- Adda**, Girolamo d', marquis, cxxiv.
- Africa**, lv, lxxxiii, lxxxiv; paralleled on other side of Atlantic, cxxi; coast of, the preserve of Portugal, cxiii; Columbus forbidden to sail along shore of, cxiv; coast of, the most obvious route to the south, cxxi.
- Aguado**, Juan, unfavourable report of, on Columbus, rejected, xlviii; conveyed to Española by de Torres, 74 n.; account of, 96 n.; recommended for advancement, 96, 98.
- Aguti**, 42 n.
- Ailly**, Pierro d', cardinal (Petrus Aliacus), tracts of, studied by Columbus, lxviii and n.; alleged influence of, on Columbus, lxxiv; annotations of Columbus on tracts of, lxxxix, xc, xci; *Imago Mundi* of, see '*Imago Mundi*'.
- Albarradas**, 80 n.
- Alfaeto** (Bayatiquiri), 148; judged by Columbus to be an island, 114 and n.; world contained between Cape St. Vincent and, 120.
- Alfragan**, his estimate of a degree accepted by Columbus, xc.
- Almadén de Azoque** (Estremadura), labourers required from mines of, 110 and n.
- Almazán**, Miguel Perez de, secretary to Ferdinand the Catholic, copy of the *Capitulations* in his handwriting, c-ci.
- Altolaquierre y Duvalé**, Angel de, xxxi n.
- Ambrosian Library**, Milan, versions of letter of Columbus in, cxxiv, cxxx.
- America**, xvi, xxv, xxxviii, xlv, lxviii, lxxv, lxxxiii, lxxxix; pre-Columbian discovery of, xiii and n.; discovery of, by Columbus, significance of, xiii-xv; opinions of Columbus before discovery of, lxiii; Columbus probably unaware of existence of, cvi.
- Anacaona**, Bartholomew Columbus persuaded to eat *iguana* by, 70 n.
- Anca**, see *Chanca*.
- Andalusia** (Andalucia), xxxii, cxiii, 84, 116.
- Angleria**, Peter Martyr, see *Martyr*, Peter (Angleria).
- Anglesey**, Mona named by Columbus after, 164 n.
- Antigua**, Santa Maria de la, sighted, 34 and n.
- Antilla**, island, reference of Toscanelli to, lxxxvii; belief in existence of, xxiv; objective of Columbus, according to Vignaud, cv; Columbus anticipated he might reach, cvi; could not be sole objective, cxix, cxi.
- Arabia**, lv.
- Arabian Gulf**, theory of Columbus regarding route to Spain by way of, 118.
- Aragón**, li, lxxi, 2 n.
- Arana**, Diego de, commander at La Navidad, 48 n.
- Arbués**, St. Pedro, murder of, cxl n.
- Aristotle**, lxxvii; reference to, by Columbus, lxviii and n.
- Asensio y Toledo**, José Maria, xix n., cxxxiv n.; on Pedro Margarit, 96 n.
- Asia**, as objective of Columbus, lxxxii, xcii, cxxi, cxxii; route to, as objective, lxv, lxvi, lxx *et seq.*, cii *et seq.*; a view of Columbus on, lxv, lxvi; references by Columbus to, cxiv, cxv; eastward extension of, xxiii; distance of, from Europe westwards, half circumference, xxiii, xxiv; paralleled Africa across the Ocean, cxxi; character of space between Europe and, xxiv, xxv, lxxv, lxxxiv, lxxxviii; islands off coast of, xxiv; situation of Catayo in, 116.
- Aspa**, Fray Antonio de, cxliv.
- Assereto**, Ugo, document printed by, xxxviii n.
- Atlantic Ocean**, views concerning passage of, xiii *et seq.*, xxiii *et seq.*, xxxix, lv, lxiv, lxv, lxvii, lxxxii, lxxxiv; crossing of, probably only a means to an end, cxxii; crossing of, terror of natives at idea of, cxxi; Columbus convinced that land lay to west of, cxii; Columbus presumed to know conditions in, cxii; mystery of, ex, cxi; islands in, xxiv, cxix.

Aurea, La (Corsica), mountains compared with, 146.

Avan, *see* Magón.

Averroes, reference to, by Columbus, lxviii n.

Avilla, Manuel, cxliv.

Axi (*Agi*), used by Indians, 68 and n.

Ayay, Carib island, identification of, 32 and n.

Azores, xxiv, lxiv, ciii, cv, cxxxiii; stories of lands to the west, current in, lxxiv; effect on Columbus of residence in Madeira and, cix.

Babcock, William E., xxiv n.

Badajoz, bishop of, *see* Fonseca, Juan Rodriguez de.

Bahia, 116 and n.

Ballester y Castell, Rafael, cl n.

Barbola, money left by Diego Columbus to son of, 114 n.

Barcelona, edition of letter of Columbus possibly printed at, cxxvii, cxxix, cxxx; sea route to, cxxxvi *et seq.*; grant to Columbus confirmed at, ci, cxlii; Montserrat named after mountain near, 34 n.

Barros, João de, xxxv n.; described Columbus as proficient Latinist, lxxxi and n.

Basse Terre, 26 n.

Batabanó (Batatbanó), Golfo de, 142 n.; Columbus in, 140 n.

Batatbanó, *see* Batabanó.

Bayatiquirl, *see* Alfaeto.

Beatrice, lxxvi.

'Bebeque' ('Beneque'), 128 n.

Becerrillo, dog, 126 n.

Belloy, Marquis de, xviii n.

Beltrán, to be employed in confidential matters, 96 and n.; sum granted to by sovereigns, 98, 110.

'Beneque', *see* 'Bebeque'.

Benil, fray, *see* Buil, fray.

Berardi, Jacinto, 84 n.

Bergenroth, G. A., ci n.

Bernáldez, Andrés, cura of Los Palacios, lxv, eviii, exi, cxxiii, cxliii, 2 n., 6 n., 12 n., 124 n., 142 n., 158 n.; on first voyage, cxxx and n.; account of, cxlvi and n. *et seq.*; on journal of second voyage, cxliii and n.; accepted sphericity of globe, xxii and n.; described Columbus as a hawker of printed books, xxxii and n.; as of little book-learning, xxxvi; rejected story of tailed men in Cuba,

eviii; on lack of clothing of natives, 6 n.; indebted to Chanca, 20 n., 116 and n., 118 n.; on Juan de Fonseca, 84 n.; on case of Firmin Zedo, 94 n.; *Historia de los Reyes Católicos* of, cxxiii, cxlvi *et seq.*, 114 and n. *et seq.*; visit of Columbus to, 116 and n.; on writings of Columbus, 116 and n., 158 and n.; not clear on route of Columbus from Cuba, 158 n.; inaccurate statement of, 164 n.

Berwick and Alba, duchess of, xix n.

Bettencourt, Jean de, cv.

Biblioteca Colombiana, cl.

Birardo, Lorenzo, *see* Giraldi, Lorenzo.

Bloy, Leon, xviii n.

Bobadilla, Beatriz de, lady paramount of Gomera, 20 n.

Bobadilla, Francisco de, xlvi; character of, as described by Ferdinand Columbus, xxx and n.; Diego Columbus arrested by, 114 n.

Bohío (Española), *see* Marien.

Boluchen, *see* Burenquen.

Boriquen, *see* Burenquen.

Borromeo, Giovanni de, xxxii.

Brazil, discovery of, by Cabral, xv n.

Briblesca, Jimeno de, 106.

Buenicún (Rio Seco), 78 n.

Bueno, Rio, mouth of, reached, 126 and n.

Buen Tiempo, *see* Montego Bay.

Buil (Benil, Boil, Boyl, Bruil, Buyl), fray, advocated arrest of Guacanagari, 58 n.; account of, 74 and n.; ignorant of native language, 88 n.; successor to Bernal de Pisa to be approved by, 94 n.; Pedro Margarit returned to Spain with, 96 n.; suggestion of Ulloa concerning, 96 n.; one of commission left to govern Isabella, 114 and n.

Burenquen (Porto Rico), 38 and n., 40, 60. *See also* Puerto Rico.

Burenwuen, *see* Burenquen.

Burgos, bishop of, *see* Fonseca, Juan Rodriguez de.

Cabo Cruz, 124 n.; Columbus reached, 128 n.

Cabral, xiii, xv n.

Cabras (Goat Island), 42 n.

Cadiz, fleet left, 20; distance from

- Ferro to, 22; Antonio de Torres reached, 74 n.; supplies drawn from, on second voyage, 84 n.; theory of Columbus regarding route back to, 118.
- Calatayud**, cxxxix n., cxi n.
- Calicut**, 118.
- Camaguey**, *see* Ornofay.
- Canaries**, *see* Canary Islands.
- Canarreos**, Archipelago de los, islands constituting, 140 and n.
- Canary**, Grand, conquest of, 2 n.; Columbus put into, 20.
- Canary Islands**, xxiii, xxiv, xxv, lvi, lxiv, ciii, cv, 2 and n., 18 and n.; land believed to be 350 leagues west of, xxxix; reasons of Columbus for steering to, cxii; cxiii; duration of voyage from, to Indies, 2 and n.
- Cannibals**, conversion of, 88 *et seq.*
- Caonabo**, Indian cacique, hostility of, to Spaniards, 48 and n., 50 and n.; said by Indians to have killed the Christians, 54, 56; Indian wounded by, 62; gold mines in dominion of, 66; in Niti, 70; captured by Ojeda, 76 n., 96 n.; character of, 80 and n.; fort of St. Thomas besieged by, 96 n.
- 'Capitulations of Santa Fé'**, lviii, cv; original lost, xcix; copy in the *Libro-Registro de la Corona de Aragon*, xcix and n., c and n., ci; use of past tense in copy of, ci, cxix, cxxii; demands of Columbus in, ci, cxlii; variations between, and the grant at Granada, ci; demand of Columbus to be made viceroy and governor general in, ci, cxix; purpose of Columbus as revealed by, cxxii.
- Caracol**, Bay of, *see* Puerto Real.
- Caravel**, character of, 18 n.
- Carbet**, river, 26 n.
- 'Cardera'**, ship, taken by Columbus on voyage to discover Cuba and Jamaica, 114 n.
- Carib Islands**, Columbus stated his desire to visit, cxvii; reached by Columbus, 26; not visited by Columbus after his voyage to Cuba, 166 and n.
- Caribs**, raids by, xcii; poison of, 24 n.; suspicion that natives were, 28 n.; lost party believed eaten by, 28; customs of, 30-32; Montserrat depopulated by, 34; San Martin inhabited by, 36; appearance of, 38; Indian fear of, 40; fight with, 44; women taken in islands of, 60; Spaniards and, 164.
- Carminis**, Leonardo (Berardo), de, bishop of Monte Peloso, causes printing of Latin version of Letter of Columbus on first voyage, cxxxi.
- Carrillo**, Maria de, wife of Pedro Margarit, 96 n.
- Carvajal**, Alonso Sanchez de, a member of commission left to govern Isabella, 114 n.
- Casas**, Bartolomé de las, *see* Las Casas.
- Castile**, xv, xlvii, xlviii, liv, ci, 2 n., 160, 164; condition of, li; rulers of, lxiii, lxxi, cx; Canaries most westerly possession of, cxii; agreements between Portugal and, cxiv; Tenerife acquired by, 2 n.; Columbus in sea of, 18; names borne by ships of, 22 n.; darts used by boys in, 62; ships to leave for, 70; Antonio de Fonseca contador mayor of, 84 n.; slaves sent to, 88; salary earned by Chanca in, 98; Diego Columbus sent back to, 114 n.; Columbus visited Bernáldez in, 116 and n.; Indian interpreter baptized in, 122 n.; Simon taken to, 130 and n.; Indian dogs as food compared with kids in, 136; believed by people of Ornofay to be Heaven, 138, 156; cranes, compared with those of, 144 and n.; pigeons, compared with partridges of, 150; Indian interpreter went to, 154; described to Indians, 154, 160.
- Castilian**, Columbus' use of, xxxvi n., lxix and n.; spoken by Indian interpreter, 154.
- 'Castilian'**, a type of caravel, 18 n.
- Castilians**, Indian dogs eaten by, 136 and n.; Indians as fair as, 142.
- Castilla del Oro**, 28 n.; uncertainty of Spaniards as to names of caciques in, 50 n.
- Catalan**, Fray Buil a, 74 n.; theory that Columbus was a, 148 n.
- Catalina**, escape of, 60 n.
- Cataluña**, 12 n.
- Catayo**, lxvi, lxvii, 4 and n.; included in 'the Indies', lvi; discovered before Columbus, lxv; mission of Columbus not to reach the ruler of, lxxii; Columbus believed him-

Catayo—continued.

self to be near, xciii; purpose of Columbus not merely to reach Cipangu and, xcix–evi; a worthy objective, cxix, cxx; reference to in books noted by Columbus, cxv; Ferdinand and Isabella convinced that Columbus would reach, ciii; reputed power of ruler of, civ; Columbus contemplated reaching, cv, 116, 118; Columbus on distance between Spain and, cxii.

Cat Island, 2 n.**Cauto, rio, 150 n., 152 n.**

Cayacoa (Española), regarded as a district by Las Casas, 50 n.; as name of a cacique by Oviedo, *ibid.*

Cayamos Channel, shallowness of, 146 and n.

Cayas de Las Leguas (Jardin de la Reina), 140, 150, 156; named by Columbus, 132 and n.

Cayo Largo, island, *see* **Santa María**.

Cayre, *see* **Ceyre**.

Cerda, Luis de la, duke of Medinaceli, 2 n.; Alonso de Ojeda a client of, 76 n.

Ceyre (Cayre, Quaris), Carib island, 14 and n., 30 and n., 32 n., 38 and n.

Chanca (Anea, Ochanca), Diego Alvarez, doctor, letter of, on second voyage, cxliii *et seq.*, 20 and n. *et seq.*; on native name of Puerto Rico, 38 n.; visited Guacanagari, 58 n.; erroneously described city as 'Marta', 64 n.; nuts used by Indians of special interest to, 70 n.; on search for site for settlement, 82 n.; work and diligence of, 98; thanked by Ferdinand and Isabella, 98 n.; debt of Bernáldez to, cxlix, 20 n., 116 and n., 118 n.

Charles V, Emperor, xv.

Charles VIII, King of France, xv.

Chinillo, *see* **Santangel**.

Chios, island, voyage of Columbus to, xxxvii, 16 and n.

Cibao, 14 n., 48 n., 66; expedition of Columbus to, 70 and n.; much gold found in, 70; rivers of, 78 and n.; route of Columbus to, 78 n.; fort of St. Thomas in, 96 n.

Cibú, river, 78 n.

Cipangu, cxii; known before Columbus, lxy; Cuba identified with

by Columbus, xcii, cxx; Columbus believed himself to be near, xciii; purpose of Columbus not merely to reach Catayo and, xcix–evi; a worthy objective, cxix; Ferdinand and Isabella convinced that Columbus would reach, ciii; reputed power of, civ; Columbus contemplated reaching, cv.

Circumnavigation of the world, views on practicability of, xxxix, xliii.

Coca y Alaejos, *see* **Fonseca**, Alonso de.

Colibre, *see* **Collioure**.

Collioure (Colibre), 12 and n.

Coloma, Juan de, witnessed royal assent to demands of Columbus, ci.

Colombo, Baldassare, cxlv.

Colombo, Domenico, xxxvii, lxxviii; probable father of Christopher Columbus, xxxv; financial distress of, lxxvii.

Colombos, the, corsairs, Columbus not related to, lxxvi and n.

Colón, Diego, Indian interpreter baptized as, 122 n.

Colonus, alleged Roman ancestor of Columbus, xxxv n., lxxvi.

Columbus, Bartholomew, brother of the Admiral, xlvi, xc; handwriting of, similar to that of Columbus, xxviii; probable author of notes on explorations of Portuguese, xc and n.; persuaded to eat *iguana*, 70 n.; Coronel sent to negotiate with Roldán by, 100 n.

Columbus, Christopher (Cristoforo Colombo, Cristóbal Colón).

IN INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVE OF, *passim*; classical view of, lxx *et seq.*, lxxv–lxxvi, lxxxii *et seq.*, xcix; opinion of Vignaud on, xciii, cv; not merely eastern Asia, lxv; not merely Atlantic islands, cxiv; not merely Indies, xcix *et seq.*; not merely Antilla, cxi, cxix; his vagueness concerning, xcix, cvii, cix; possibly the extreme south, cxx–cxxii.

BIRTH, EDUCATION, &c., nationality, xxxiv; descent, xxxv and n., lxxvi; birthplace, xxxi, xxxv; birth, xxxv and n.; parentage, xxxii, xxxv and n.; origin, xxix *et seq.*; claimed not to be the first admiral of his family,

xxx n.; name, xxxv n., lxvi; name not used by himself, xciv; early life, xxix *et seq.*, xxxiii *et seq.*, xxxviii *et seq.*; went to sea, xxxvii, lxxviii; marriage, lxxvi; identity of wife, lxxvi and n.; degree of education, xvii, xxxv *et seq.* and n., lxv, lxxiii, lxxvii, lxxviii; intellectual equipment, xxviii *et seq.*; not at University of Pavia, lxxiii, lxxvi; ignorance of Italian, xxxvi; scientific knowledge nil, lxix; language used by, xxxvi and n., lxxxii and n.; Latinity, lxxxii and n.; literacy, xxxvi and n., lxxxii-lxxxiii; share of education in leading to formation of project, lxxviii; maritime knowledge, xxxvii, lii; knowledge of navigation, xl-xli; association with learned, lxxix; revolt against environment, cviii-cix; stories heard by, lxxiv.

CHARACTER OF, liii, lvii *et seq.*, lxiii, xc; business acumen, xxxvii and n., lxii; ambition, lvii, cviii; vanity, lvii; confidence, liii and n., lxiii, cviii; refusal to compromise, lvii; reasoning power, lxiv, lxxx; love of mystery, lvii; imagination, cvii, cx; poetic temper, cvii; mentality, xlvii, liii, lxx, lxxxiii; sanity, xlv-xlix; state of mind at time of third voyage, xlvii-xlix; operations of mind, lxxxiii; alarmed in storms, xxxviii n.; vagueness, xxxii, cvi *et seq.*, cx; vagueness in correspondence with Toscanelli, lxxxvii; as a sailor, xxxvii and n.; a man of his time, liv; preference for erroneous ideas, lxxx; difficulty in manning his ships, lxxxiv; reliance of, on unscientific writers, lxvii; abilities, cviii.

RELIGIOUS SPIRIT OF, xli-xlii, cviii; devotion to Trinity, liii; to Franciscans, *ibid.*, to dogma of the Immaculate Conception, *ibid.*; a man sent from God, liv, lxv; mysticism, liii, lx, lxix, lxxxv, cviii, cix, cx; mission, xlv *et seq.*, lxv, lxxxix, cvi, cx; his belief in his mission, lii *et seq.*, lxvi; his belief in divine guidance, lii, lx, cviii, cix, cx; theological knowledge, lxxviii; theological basis of his views, lxxvii, lxxviii; revelation of, xxi,

bility of navigating Atlantic, lxv-lxvi.

OPINIONS OF, xxi, xcii *et seq.*; before his discovery, xli, xliii *et seq.*, xcix, cxi; upon geographical questions, xxxviii, lxiv, lxvii, lxix; on distance of Spain from East, lxvi; on distance between Spain and Asia, lxxiv; on reaching East by West, xxxix; on passage of Atlantic, xxxix *et seq.*, xlv, lxvii; on debate of period, xxvi and n.; materials for determining, xxvi *et seq.*; qualifications for forming, xxxviii; on result of proposed voyage, lxiii *et seq.*; as revealed in *Journal* and *Letter*, xcii-xcviii; on sphericity of the globe, xxxviii-xxxix, lxxx-lxxxii, lxxxii, lxxxv; influence of discoveries of Norsemen on, xiv.

NEGOTIATIONS OF, with Ferdinand and Isabella, liv-lix, lxiii, cii-ciii; *secrecy in*, lv *et seq.*; *demands in*, xvii, xliii, lv *et seq.*, lvii, lxi, lxii, xcix, ci *et seq.*, civ; motives for demands, lxi, lxii; reticence concerning objective, &c., xxxi *et seq.*, lv *et seq.*, lxiv, lxxix, cx; motives for reticence, lxi-lxii; grants made to, lxxii, civ; passport, lxx; commission to, lxxii; claims of, xvii; claims to special service, xl-xliii.

VOYAGES OF, early voyages, xxxvii; idea on first voyage, lxx *et seq.*; voyage to Chios, xxxvii.

DISCOVERIES OF, importance, xlv-xlvii; extent, xvi, xc; discovery of America anticipated, xliii; effect on Columbus, xlv-xlvii.

REPUTATION OF, degree of credit due to, xvi *et seq.*, xix; credit disputed, xxi; controversy on reputation, xvii-xviii; attacks on, xvii, xix, xx; traditional account, xviii; achievement, xiv-xv.

AGE OF, one of speculation, xxi; of experience *versus* authority, xxi-xxii; of intellectual activity, xxi; of belief in divine inspiration, xlix-lii; opinions in, xxv.

WRITINGS OF, &c., *Journal*, see *Journal*; correspondence with Toscanelli, liii, lxxxvii, lxxxviii.

Columbus, Christopher—*continued*.
 compilation of *Libro de las Pro-
 fecias*, liii; light thrown by, on his
 views, xxvi; notes, xxvii–xxviii,
 xxxvi, lxvi, lxxxix, xc, xci;
 cypher, xxxi, liii, lvii; log book,
 xxvii and n.

IN TEXT

FIRST VOYAGE OF, 2–19; islands
 discovered, 2 and n.; named, 2
 and n.; annexed, 12; landfall,
 2 n.; Española, described, 12–16;
 natives, described, 6–12 and n.,
 14–16 and n., taken by force, 10
 and n., taken to Spain, 10 n.;
 islands inhabited only by women,
 16 and n.; opinions, on character
 of Cuba, 6–12; on conversion of
 natives, 10–12; on clothing of
 natives, 6 n.; on language, 12 n.;
 on slave trade, 16 n.; visit to
 Chios, 16 n.; men left at La Navi-
 dad, 12 and n., 14 and n.;
 standard, 2 and n.; influence of
 'Lullism' on, 2 n.; anxious to
 reach Española, 6 n.

SECOND VOYAGE OF, 20–167;
 islands discovered, 22 and n., 38
 and n., 130 *et seq.*, 140, 148;
 named, 38 n., 114 and n., 132 n.,
 134 n., 164 n.; annexed, 24; not
 seen on first voyage, 40; landed at
 Guadeloupe, 26; ordered boat to
 land at San Martin, 34 and n.;
 commanded lombards to be fired
 to attract attention of Christians
 at La Navidad, 46; searched
 ground near La Navidad, 52;
 searched for site for new settle-
 ment, 54, 62, 82 and n.; ordered
 search for escaped women, 60;
 on building of Isabella, 80; anxious
 to complete Isabella, 78 n.; on
 illness of Spaniards, 78 and n., 80,
 82; anxious to protect, 78, 80; on
 difficulty of transporting gold, 78;
 on method of collecting, 82, 110;
 on method of freighting ships, 92;
 on slave trade, 88, 90, 92 and n.;
 expedition to Cibao, 14 n., 70 n.;
 flagship, 22 n.; standard, 24 and
 n.; affair with Beatriz de Boba-
 dilla, 20 n.; need of Española, for
 wine and provisions, 84 and n.
et seq., 106 and n. *et seq.*, for live-
 stock, 86 and n., 90–2, for arms
 and ammunition, 106–8; rations
 allowed to Spaniards, 80 n.;

supplies taken, of seeds, 84 n., of
 livestock, 86 n., for personal use,
 88 n.; ships taken, 114 n.; recom-
 mendations for salary, advance-
 ment, &c., regarding de Torres,
 Margarit, Gaspar and Beltrán,
 Juan Aguado, Villacorta, 96 and
 n., 110–12, Chanca, 98, Coronel,
 Gil Garcia, 100 and n., artisans
 and other settlers, 104, 108; dis-
 tance covered, 120 and n.; dis-
 tances exaggerated, 124 n.; speed
 made, 158; natives, sent home to
 be trained as interpreters, 88;
 houses of, entered at Guadeloupe,
 26; captured at San Martin, 36–8;
 presents exchanged with Guaca-
 nagari, 56–8; conversation with
 Guacanagari, 56–8; with cousin
 of, 48, 50; with natives of Espa-
 ñola, 44.

**EXPLORATION OF COASTS OF
 CUBA AND JAMAICA BY**, off coast
 of Cuba, 118–24, 128–58; of
 Jamaica, 124–8; in Golfo de
 Batabanó, 140 and n.; landed near
 Rio Cauto, 152 and n.; reached
 Macaca, 158; crossed to Jamaica,
 158 and n.; returned to Española,
 164 and n.; natives, questioned
 about Cuba, 118, 130, chastised in
 Jamaica, 126; presents exchanged
 with natives in Jamaica, 126–8,
 164; in Ornofay, 152; conversa-
 tion with natives of Cuba, 128–30,
 134, 136; of Ornofay, 152–4; in
 Jamaica, 158–64; hostility of
 Pedro Margarit, 96 n.; of Juan de
 Soria, 102 and n.; of Fonseca,
 84 n.; of Spaniards at Isabella,
 78 n.; of Bernal de Pisa, 94 n.; of
 Juan Aguado, 96 n.; of Fray
 Buil, 74 n.; his conduct in Espa-
 ñola attacked, 96 n.; his 'book' of
 second voyage, 116 and n., 158
 and n.; his letter to Diego Colum-
 bus, 74 n.

Columbus, Diego, brother of the
 Admiral, account of, 114 n.; left
 as president at Isabella, 114 and n.

Columbus, Diego, son of the Ad-
 miral, his lawsuit against the
 Crown, xvi, xvii, 76 n.; date of
 letter to, 74 n.

Columbus, Ferdinand, bastard son
 of the Admiral, xcv, xcvii; on
 views of Columbus, xxvi and n.;
 his authority, xxx and n.; on early
 life of Columbus, xxx *et seq.*; on

- origin of Columbus, xxxv and n., lxxvi; on education of Columbus, xxxv and n.; on negotiations with Ferdinand and Isabella, lv, lxxiv, lxxxi, lxxxii, lxxxviii, xciv; on objective of Columbus, lxxiii, cix n.; on name of Columbus, lxvi n.; on journals kept by Columbus, cxliii and n.; version of letter of Columbus in library of, cxxix; his *Historie*, xxvi and n., xxx and n., xxxi and n., xxxii, xciv, cxlv and n., cxlvi and n., 8 n.; Fray Ramón's report preserved by, 8 n.; on number of men left at La Navidad, 12 n.; on native name for Santa Maria de la Antigua, 34 n.; on destruction of La Navidad, 48 n.; on rapid growth of seeds in Española, 84 n.; on livestock taken on second voyage, 86 n.; on arrival of Columbus at Macaca, 128 n.; on number of islands in Indies, 130 n.; on friendliness of Indian fishermen to Columbus, 134 n.; on 'Santa Maria' island, *ibid.*; on incident in Santa Maria, 142 n.; on incident of the old Indian, 154 n.; used logbook of his father, 158 n.; conversation of Columbus with cacique not mentioned by, 164 n.
- Columbus**, Luis, grandson of the Admiral, compromise accepted by, xvi; copy of *Journal* possibly in possession of, xciv; character of, *ibid.*
- Comestor**, Petrus, lxviii and n.
- Copper**, more prized than gold by natives, 58; ornaments worn by cacique probably of, 162 and n.
- Cordillera de Los Organos**, *see* **Organos**, Cordillera de Los.
- Córdoba**, Gonsalvo Fernandez de, lii.
- Córdoba**, Bishop of, *see* **Fonseca**, Juan.
- Coronel**, Pero Hernandez, account of, 100 and n.; one of the members of commission left to govern Isabella, 114 n.
- Cortés**, Hernando, cxvii, 84 n.
- Cosa**, Juan de la, pilot, xl n.
- Cosco**, Leonardo (Leandro) de, cxxxi, cxxxix n., cxli n., 2 n.
- Cotrenquin**, river, 78 n.
- Cristallino**, Monte, *see* **Portland Point**.
- Cromwell**, Oliver, xli.
- Cronau**, Rudolf, 2 n., 22 n.
- Crooked Island**, *see* **Isabella**.
- Cuba** (Juana), cv n., cxvii, 6, 118 n., 132 n., 142 n., 158 n., identified with Cipangu, xcii, cxx; tailed men in, cviii; course of Columbus to, cxvi; account of exploration of coast of, cxlvi, cxlix, 114-67; named 'Isla Juana' by Columbus, 2 and n.; doubt of Columbus concerning character of, 4 n., 118, 120 n., 128, 130; Cape Alfaeto in, 114, 120; animals in, 120 and n.; Macaca in, 128 n.; character of people of, 130 and n.; compared with Española, 6 n., 130 n.; fish in, 132, 134 and n.; birds in, 136 and n.; mountains in, *ibid.*; nature of sea between Isla de Pinos and, 140 n.; pearl fisheries off coast of, 148 n.; coastline of, 148 n.; Columbus left coast of, for Jamaica, 158 and n.
- Cuenca**, colegio mayor of, cxxv; Ojeda born at, 76 n.; preferment for bishopric at, 114 n.
- 'Cuenta General'**, Jacomo el Rico described in, 48 n.
- Cumana**, raided, 76 n.
- Cuneo**, Michele de, account of second voyage by, cxliii and n.; sophistication of, cxlix; on love affair of Columbus, 20 n.; on return of lost party, 28 n.; on search party led by Ojeda, 32 n.; on native name of Puerto Rico, 38 n.; on destruction of La Navidad, 48 n.; on death of the Christians, 58 n.; on search for site for settlement, 82 n.
- Custodi**, Pietro, baron, cxxiv.
- Cuxá**, Fray Buil, abbot of, 74 n.
- Dante**, lxxvi.
- Darien**, discovered by Columbus, cxviii.
- Dati**, Giulano, metrical rendering of letter of Columbus by, cxxiii, cxxxi and n.
- David**, Columbus compared himself with, lix.
- Deza**, Diego de, archbishop of Seville, cxlvii, cxlix.
- Dominica**, 14 n., 24 n.; first land sighted on second voyage, 22 and n.; Ceyre identified with, 32 n., 38 n.
- Duro**, Cesareo Fernandez, *see* **Fernandez Duro**.

- Earthly Paradise**, situated in the south, cxv.
- Egypt**, sultan of, mission of Peter Martyr to, civ.
- Engaño**, Point (Española), 40 n.
- England**, king of, lxiii.
- Enriquez**, Fadrique, cxli n.
- 'Epilogus Mappe Mundi'**, note by Columbus on, xxxix, lxvi n., xc n.
- Escovedo**, Rodrigo de, secretary to fleet on first voyage, cxxviii; left as lieutenant to Diego de Arana at La Navidad, 48 n.
- Escuderos (lanzas)**, of the Hermandad, brought from Granada for service in Española, 102 and n.
- Esdras**, used by Columbus as authority for proportion of land and water, lxvii, lxviii.
- Española**, cxvi, cxlv, cxlvi; report of Aguado on the administration of Columbus in, xlviii; discontent of settlers in, xci; Columbus believed trade with Grand Khan to be possible by way of, xcii; first sighted, 4 and n.; description of, 4-12 and n.; extent of, 12 and n., 42 and n.; uncertainty of Spaniards regarding names in, 50 n.; flora and fauna of, 6 and n., 42 and n., 70 n.; climate of, 14, 62; fertility of, 6, 62 and n.; fish of, 62 and n.; method of fishing in, 134 n.; mountains of, 4-6; harbours of, 6; metals of, 6; ships of natives of, 10; de Torres returned to, with supplies, 74 n.; Ovando sent to, 74 n.; livestock sent to, 86 n.; a cause of removal of Columbus from government of, 92 n.; Margarit attacked conduct of Columbus in, 96 n.; Aguado sent to, 96 n.; memorial of Columbus on needs of, 106 n.; idea of making a penal settlement of, 106 n.; return of Diego Columbus to, 114 n.; Diego Columbus held *repartimento* of Indians in, 114 n.; San Nicolas in extreme west of, 114 n.; estimate of coastline of, 124 n.; compared with Cuba, 130 n.; Indians sent to sovereigns after Columbus' return to, 154 and n.; Columbus prevented from reaching, 158 n.; Columbus returned to, from Cuba and Jamaica, 166.
- Ethiopia**, route back to Spain by way of, 118.
- Eugenius IV**, Pope, envoys sent to, by Grand Khan, lxxi; ambassadors from Catayo had come to, ciii.
- Europe**, lxv, lxxi, lxxiii, lxxxiii, lxxxiv, lxxxviii; debt of, to Columbus, xv; sphericity of globe, accepted in western, xxii; distance of, by sea from Asia, xxiii; relation of Indies to, lv; Cipangu not visited by any one from, ciii; continent interposed between eastern Asia and western, cxi.
- Europeans**, visits of, to New World before Columbus, xiii-xv.
- Far East**, the, lxxi, lxxiii, cxix, cxx, cxxi, cxxii.
- Farol**, Punta del (Yallah Point), reached, 158; stated by Las Casas to be most easterly point of Jamaica, 158 n.; correct identification of, *ibid.*
- Fathers of the Church**, called upon to testify to justice of Columbus' spiritual claim, xci.
- Ferdinand**, the Catholic (*see also Ferdinand and Isabella*), attempt on life of, cxxxvii and n.; Diego de Deza, confessor to, cxlvii; attempt of, to rename Cuba, 2 n.
- Ferdinand and Isabella**, King and Queen of Castile and Aragon (*see also Ferdinand, the Catholic, and Isabella, the Catholic*), xliii, xlvii, liii, liv, lxii and n., xcii, cxiv, c, 118, 154; letters of Columbus to, xlii, xlvii, lxvi, lxix, lxxxiii, cxxxii *et seq.*, cxli; negotiations of Columbus with, *see Columbus*, Negotiations of, with Ferdinand and Isabella; impression conveyed to by Columbus, regarding his objective, lv; grants to Columbus by, lxx and n., lxxii and n., cii, ciii; confidence of, in Columbus, xlviii and n.; establishment of unity in Castile by, li-lii; reticence of Columbus towards, lxxxvi, cii, cxxi; accuracy in drafting official documents of, cii; title given to, in Prologue to *Journal*, xciv; Columbus addressed as Don by, ci; policy of, in Eastern Asia, civ; regarding Portuguese, cxiii; suzerainty of, over Canaries, recognized, 2 n.; weight of gold in *castellano* in time of, 8 n.;

- arranged for Chanca to accompany Columbus, 20 n.; sent Melchior Maldonado on mission to Pope, 54 n.; memorandum of Columbus sent to, 74 and n.; Juan de Fonseca gained favour of, 84 n.; Columbus' suggestion for slave trade rejected by, 92 n.; letter of thanks to Chanca from, 98 n.; Bernáldez' *Historia* of, cxlvi *et seq.*; 114 and n. *et seq.*; confined preferment to bishopric to their own subjects, 114 n.; prevention of tyranny of Indian caciques by, 156 n.
- Fernandez de Córdoba**, Gonsalvo, *see* Córdoba.
- Fernandez de Navarrete**, Martin, *see* Navarrete.
- Fernandez de Oviedo**, Gonzalo, *see* Oviedo.
- Fernandez Duro**, Cesareo, xiii n.; criticized the accepted story of Columbus, xix and n.; on arrival of Columbus at Lisbon, 18 n.
- Fernandez Manrique**, Garcia, 108 n.
- Fernandina** (Long Island), 2 and n.
- Ferro**, island, 22 and n.
- Fita y Colomer**, Fidel, 74 n.
- Flanders**, merchants of, 92.
- Florida**, cxvii.
- Fonseca**, Alonso de, archbishop of Seville, uncle of Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, 84 n.
- Fonseca**, Alonso de, señor de Coca y Alaejos, brother of Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, 84 n.
- Fonseca**, Antonio, contador mayor of Castile, brother of Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, 84 n.
- Fonseca**, Juan Alonso de, doctor, father of Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, 84 n.
- Fonseca**, Juan Rodriguez de, conde de Pernia, archdeacon of Seville, and successively bishop of Badajoz, Córdoba, Palencia and Burgos, cxlvii, cl, 88, 92, 94, 98, 104, 106, 108, 110; confirmed in position as controller of Indies, in Spain, 74 n.; Alonso de Ojeda a favourite of, 76 n.; instructed to send seeds, &c., to Columbus, 84; account of, 84 n.; *lanzas* to be inspected by, 102 n.; ordered to reprimand Soria, 102 n.; Columbus left writings with Bernáldez in the presence of, 116 and n.
- Fontanarossa**, Susanna, probable mother of Columbus, xxxv and n.
- France**, king of, lxiii.
- Franciscans**, attachment of Columbus to the, liii and n.
- Fuentes**, cxlvii, cxlviii.
- Gaffarel**, Paul, xiii n.
- Galicia**, 2 n.
- Galina Point** (Jamaica), Columbus reached Jamaica near, 124 n.
- Galindez Carvajal**, Lorenzo, cxxxvii n.
- 'Gallega'**, La, ship, bought by Columbus, 94.
- Gallo**, Antonio, described Columbus as of plebeian birth, xxxv and n.; described parents of Columbus as weavers and tavern keepers, xxxvii.
- Gama**, Vasco da, xiii.
- Ganges**, the, lvi, cxv; theory of Columbus regarding route to Spain by, 118.
- Garcia**, Gil, 100 and n.
- Garcia de La Riega**, Celso, 2 n.
- Garcilasso de la Vega**, Inca, *see* Vega, Garcilasso de la.
- Gaspar**, to be employed in confidential matters, 96 and n.; sum granted to, 98, 110.
- Genoa**, mention of, by Columbus, as his birthplace, xxxi; stated to be birthplace of Columbus by Bernáldez, xxxii; probably birthplace of Columbus, xxxv; residence of Columbus at, xxxvi, lxxviii; weavers' school at, lxxvii and n.
- Genoese**, lvii, lxxviii; Columbus a, xxxiv, cix; acquired Chios, 16 n.; Jacome el Rico a, 48 n.
- Giraldi** (Girardi, Birardo), Lorenzo, approached by Columbus, lxxiv and n.; as intermediary of Columbus, lxxxvi.
- Giustiniani**, Agostino, asserts plebeian origin of Columbus, xxx and n., xxxv n.
- Girardi**, Lorenzo, *see* Giraldi.
- Goat Island**, *see* Cabras.
- Gold**, Indian fashions of wearing, 56; presented by Guacanagari to Columbus, 58; news of, in eastern Española, 62; in Cibao and Niti, 70; discovered by Gorbalan and Ojeda, 76; only specimens of, sent home, 80; not produced in rivers,

Gold—continued.

108, 110; not found in Jamaica, 128 and n.

Golden Chersonese, the (Malay Peninsula), Columbus near, 118 and n.

Gomara, Francisco Lopez de, on discovery of New World, xv and n.; on story of the pilot, xvii n.; uncertain when the Indies were discovered or by whom, xviii and n.

Gomera, date of start from, 2 n.; stay of Columbus at, 20 and n.; livestock shipped at, 86 n.

Gonzalez, Tomás, cxxiv and n.

Goodrich, Aaron, revived story of the pilot, xix and n.

Gorbalan, Ginés de, returned to Spain, and was granted lands in Granada, 70 n.; one of the discoverers of gold, 76 and n.

Gorda, Punta, *see* **Serafin**, Punta del.

Gorrício, Gaspar, share in compiling the *Libro de las Profecías* of, lxxviii; letter to, cxlv.

Gould y Quincy, Alice, 4 n., 12 n.; on first Christian to die in New World, 48 n.

Gracias, Puerto de las, site chosen on, 62 n.

Granada, cxlviii, cl; grant made to Columbus at, lxxii, xeviii, cxlii; Columbus not styled 'Don' in grant of, c; variations between *Capitulations* and text of grant of, ci; Ginés de Gorbalan granted lands in district of, 70 n.; Ferdinand de Zafra to find *lanzas* of the Santa Hermandad in kingdom of, 102 n.

Grand Canary, *see* **Canary**, Grand.

Grand Khan, lxxiii, 12; Columbus sought to establish relations with, cxxii; belief of Columbus that he would reach dominions of, cxii, cxvi; dominions of, not real objective of Columbus, cxix; natives of Guanahani supposed to be at war with, cxx and n.; letters carried by Columbus for, lxx and n.; title of, ceased to be in current use, lxxi and n.; dominions of, already 'discovered', lxxii; letter of Toscanelli deals with route to dominions of, lxxiv; efforts to establish cordial relations with, civ;

failed to conquer Cipangu, ciii; supposed possibility of trade between Española and dominions of, xcii; Columbus convinced that he was near dominions of, cxvi and n.; Mandeville on, 116.

Grand Terre, 26 n.

Grand Turk, 2 n.

Greece, 16.

Greeks, lx, lxxix.

Greenland, xiv.

Gregory, St., of Tours, lxxxix.

Grijalva, Juan de, cxvii.

Guacamari, *see* **Guacanagari**.

Guacanagari (Goacanagari, Goachanari, Guacanari, Guaccanarillus, Guadacanarillus), Indian cacique, xlvi, 14 n., 48 n.; Columbus' friendship with, 14 and n.; relative of, questioned about the Christians, 50; wounded, *ibid.*; suspected of treachery, 52; Columbus on his way to, 44; a cousin of, approached Columbus, 48; sent presents to Columbus, *ibid.*; Columbus visited, 56; supposed wounds of, examined, 58 and n.; women told to escape by brother of, 60; houses of, burned by Caonabo, 62; Fray Buil advocated vigorous measures against, 74 n.

Guadeloupe, 24 n.; extent of, 27 n.; islands forming, 32 n.

Guanahani (San Salvador: Watling Island), cxii; landfall of Columbus, cxvi; course followed by Columbus after reaching, cxvi, cxxii; belief of Columbus regarding natives of, cxx; first island sighted by Columbus, 2 and n.

Guantanamo, Bay of, *see* **Puerto Grande**.

Guatemala, cxvii.

Guinea, 14; voyages of Columbus to, xxxvii, xc; Columbus forbidden to go to, cii, cxiii.

Gutierrez, Pero, left as lieutenant to Diego de Arana at La Navidad, 48 n.

Haiti, *see* **Española**.

Harris, Henry, xiii n., xix and n., cxxxi n., 2 n.; on character of *Historie* of Ferdinand Columbus, xxxi n.

Henry, prince, of Portugal, 'the Navigator', xiv.

Hermandad, Santa, the, *lanzas* of, 102 n.

- Herrera, Antonio de**, xviii and n., cxxvii; *Historia General* of, cxxv.; on building of Isabella, 66 n.
- Herrera, Diego de**, recognized suzerainty of Ferdinand and Isabella over Canaries, 2 n.
- Higuey**, most easterly province of Española, 42 n.
- 'Historia de las Indias'**, see *Las Casas*.
- 'Historia de los Reyes Católicos'**, see *Bernaldez*.
- 'Historia General'**, see *Herrera, Antonio de*.
- 'Historie'**, see *Columbus, Ferdinand*.
- Holy Places**, the, desire of Columbus to rescue, cxix and n.
- Honduras, Cape**, cxvii.
- Humboldt, Alexander von**, xix and n.
- Huntingdon, A. M.**, cxxvii n.
- Iceland**, xiv.
- Iguana**, the, 70 n.
- 'Imago Mundi'**, the, lxvi n., xc n.; studied by Columbus, lxviii; tracts of Pierre d'Ailly known as, lxxxix; notes of Columbus on, cxiv, cxv n.
- Immaculate Conception**; devotion of Columbus to dogma of the, liii and n.
- India**, north-west passage to, xiv.
- Indian**, found wounded, 62; interpreter of Columbus an, 122 and n., 124 and n.; Columbus welcomed by an old, 152-4.
- Indians**, 94; taken to Spain, 10 n.; Caribs contrasted with other, 38; dogs domesticated by, 42 n.; lizards eaten by, 42; dogs eaten by, 136; delicacies of, 70 n.; method of fishing of, 132 and n.; tame birds of, 136 and n.; turtles valued by, 150 and n.; received by Columbus, 44, 46; suspicious attitude of, 50; suspicions of discoverers regarding, 78, 80, 82 and n.; friendliness of, 128; intelligence of, 154-6; barbarism of, 52; as interpreters, 60; weapons of, 62; decoration of, 64-65, 126; goods bartered with, 64; ignorant of gold-digging, 70; Fray Buil superintended conversion of, 74 n.; mass said by Columbus with, 152; Alonso de Ojeda ('a sinner of a man'), killed by, 76 n.; Diego Columbus held *repartimiento* of, 114 n.; questioned by Columbus about Juana, 118, 130; Columbus' treatment of, at Santa Gloria, 126 and n.; brought back to Castile, 130 n.; band of, near Punta del Serafin, 142; Castile described to, 154, 160; appearance of, 160 and n., 162 and n.
- Indies**, the, lxxxv, cxii, 10; Gomara on discovery of, xv, xviii; Columbus charged with treasonable design regarding, xxxiv and n.; 'enterprise of', lii, xlii, lvii, lxiii, xci; referred to as land of spices, lxxxvii; as objective of Columbus, lv, lxx, lxxxviii, ciii, cxxii; vagueness of term, lv, lvi; taken to mean some part of Asia, lxxi; contemporary interest in, lxxxii; journey to, 2 n.; scheme for slave trade with, 16 n.; weather in, 18; Chanca to go to, 20 n.; *axi* the only spice in, 68 n.; Ginés de Gorbalan rewarded for services in, 70 n.; swine in, 86 n.; Coronel made *aguacil mayor* of, 100; *lanzas* to go to, 102 n.; Juan de Soria to receive goods from, *ibid.*; Columbus set out to discover mainland of, 114; Juana the eastern extremity of, *ibid.*; lands of Prester John in, 116 and n.; islands of, 130 and n.
- Indies**, Archives of, at Seville, cxlv.
- Indies**, Council of, cxlv, 84 n.
- Inquisition**, the, li, cxlvii and n., 96 n.
- 'Institución del Mayorazgo'**, xxxi n., xxxiv.
- Interpreters**, cannibals to be trained as, 88.
- Ires, Guillermo**, 12 n.
- Irving, Washington**, xviii and n.; on character of Fray Buil, 74 n.; on Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, 84 n.; on Pedro Margarit, 96 n.
- Isabella**, the Catholic (see also *Ferdinand and Isabella*), liv; beliefs of, li-iii; Columbus unlikely to risk displeasure of, c; modesty of, cxxxii; death of, cxlviii and n.; reluctance of Bernaldez to admit equality of, with Ferdinand, 2 n.; Alonso de Ojeda attracted attention of, 76 n.; Juan Aguado member of household of, 96 n.
- Isabella**, city (Española) (see also *Isola Bella*), 2 n.; Chanca's account ends with foundation of,

Isabella—continued.

cxlvi, cxlix; fertility of land round, 62 and n.; rivers at, 62 and n.; building of, 66 n.; council of regency at, 74 n., 96 n., 100 n., 114 n.; Antonio de Torres alcaide of, cxlvi n., 74 and n.; Columbus anxious to complete, 78 n.; hostility of Spaniards to Columbus at, 94 n.; Columbus returned to, 164 n.

Isabella (Ysabela; Crooked Island), fourth island discovered, 2 n.

Isabella, rio (Española), 64 n.

Isla de Pinos, *see* **Pinos**, *Isla de*.

Isola Bella (*see also* **Marta and Isabella**), wrongly conjectured to be name given to Española and city of Isabella, 64 n.

Italy, xv, lxxvi, lxxxi and n.

Jaffa, theory of Columbus regarding route to Spain by, 118.

Jaime, *see* **Jamaica**.

Jamaica (Jaime, Santiago), account given by Bernáldez of exploration of coast of, cxlvi *et seq.*, 114-67; discovered by Columbus, 118; described, 124 and n.; Columbus left, 128; identified with 'Bebeque', 128 n.; method of fishing in, 132 and n.; Columbus resolved to return by way of, 148; called *Jaime*, by Bernáldez, 148 and n.; Columbus crossed from Cuba to, 158 n.; Columbus sailed to Española from, 164 n.

Jardin de la Reina, *el*, *see* **Cayas de las Leguas**.

Jerusalem, 118.

Jews, lx, lxxix; expulsion of, from Spain, lii; hated by Bernáldez, cxlvii.

John, Prester, lx, lxxiii, civ; dominion of, possibly in 'the Indies', lvi; efforts to secure aid of, civ; Catayo near lands of, 116.

John of Westphalia, *see* **Westphalia**, John of.

'**Journal**', the, of the first voyage of Columbus, cxii n., cxxxiv, 10 n., 12 n., 16 n., 18 n., 20 n., 22 n., 48 n.; as evidence of opinions of Columbus, xxvi, xlv, xcii, xeviii; evidence of, on objective of Columbus, lxxii, xcii *et seq.*, cvi; as evidence that Columbus was to deliver letters to the Grand Khan, lxx and n.; preserved in a précis by Las Casas,

xxvii, xlv; character of this précis, xciv-xcv; edited after original composition, xxvii, xevi; probably not in autograph of Columbus, xxvii and n., xeviii; credibility of, xlv, xlvi; character of, xcii *et seq.*; prologue of, not authentic, xciii-xciv; literary style of, xevi-xcvii; reveals poetic temperament of Columbus, cvii; stories of western lands in, cix; states that Columbus might not go to Portuguese lands, cxiii; on condition of his ships, cxvii and n.; shows that he believed lands discovered to be Asiatic, cxx.

Juan, Prince, 74 n.; letter of Columbus to nurse of, xxx n.; death of, 84 n.; Juan de Soria secretary to, 102 n.; Simon given to, 130 and n.

Juan II, of Aragon, cxxxix n.

Juana, *Isla*, *see* **Cuba**.

'**Justiniani**', Albergo degli, 16 n.

Kerney, Michael, cxxiv and n.

Keyserling, M., 4 n.

Lajes, Tallarte de, 12 n.

Lamartine, de Prat, M. L. A. de, xviii and n., cxxxiv n.

Lanzas, *see* **Escuderos**.

Las Casas, Bartolomé de, 2 n., 10 n., 12 n., 34 n., 150 n.; on story of the pilot, xvii n.; on early life of Columbus, xxx *et seq.*, lxxvi and n., lxxxii; on approach of Columbus to Toscanelli, lxxiv; on education of Columbus, xviii, xxxv n., lxxiii, lxxviii, lxxxii; describes language of Columbus as homely, xxi and n., cxliii; on opinions of Columbus before 1492, xxvi and n.; his précis of the *Journal*, xxvii, xlv, xlvi and n., xciv *et seq.*; on origin of Columbus, xxxv n., lxxvi; on mission of Columbus, xlii; credibility of, xlv and n.; on piety of Columbus, liii; on devotion of Columbus to the Trinity, liii; on negotiations of Columbus with the sovereigns, lv and n.; on name of Columbus, lxvi and n.; on arguments influencing Columbus, lxxiv and n., cix; on Latinity of Columbus, lxxxii, lxxxiii; not a poet, cvii; *Historia de las Indias* of, references, xvii n., xxi n., xxvi n., xxx n., xxxv n., xl n., liv n.,

lxvi n.; MS. of, used by Herrera, xviii n.; character of, xcv; on scheme for slave trade, 16 n.; on naming of Dominica, 22 n.; on Diego Marquez, 28 n.; on search party led by Ojeda, 32 n.; on Columbus' name for Santa Cruz, 38 n.; on native names of Puerto Rico, *ibid.*; on provinces of Española, 42 n.; on birds of Española, 44 n.; on destruction of La Navidad, 48 n.; on quarrels among the Christians, *ibid.*; on Fray Juan Perez, 48 n.; on attack on fort of St. Thomas, 48 n.; on Cayacoa, 50 n.; on supposed wounds of Guacanagari, 58 n.; on suggested arrest of Guacanagari, *ibid.*; on San Juan de la Maguana, 66 n.; on building of Isabella, 66 n.; on expedition of Ginés de Gorbalan, 70 n.; on Antonio de Torres, 74 n.; on Columbus' reply to attacks made on him as an alien, *ibid.*; on Juan de Fonseca, *ibid.*; on Nicolas de Ovando, *ibid.*; on Fray Buil, *ibid.*; on Pedro de Villacorta, *ibid.*; on Alonso Ojeda, 76 n.; on rivers of Cibao, 78 n.; on roads of Cibao, *ibid.*; on opposition of Spaniards to Columbus, 78 n., 80 n., 94 n.; on search for site for a settlement, 82 n.; on seeds taken out by Columbus, 84 n.; on Juan de Fonseca, 85 n.; on livestock taken on second voyage, 86 n.; on causes of Columbus' removal from government of Española, 92 n.; on siege and relief of fort of St. Thomas, 96 n.; on Pedro Margarit, *ibid.*; on Juan Aguado, *ibid.*; on Colonel, 100 n.; on settlers taken on second voyage, 106 n.; on Diego Columbus, 114 n.; on ships taken by Columbus on voyage to discover mainland, 114 n.; on native name for Cape Alfaeto, 114 n.; on Diego Colón, interpreter, 122 n.; on Becerrillo, 126 n.; identified 'Bebeque' with Jamaica, 128 n.; on arrival of Columbus at Macaca, 128 n.; on Indian servant of Prince Juan, 130 n.; on products of Cuba, 130 n.; on number of islands in Indies, *ibid.*; on friendliness of Indian fishermen to Columbus, 134 n.; on 'Santa Maria', island, 134 n.; on tame birds of Indians, 136 n.; on nature

of sea between Isla de Pinos and Cuba, 140 n.; on incident in Santa Maria, 142 n.; on turtles, 150 n.; on incident of the old Indian, 154 n.; on route of Columbus towards Española, 158 n.; log book of Columbus used by, 158 n.; on bay, probably Portland Bight, 158 n.; conversation of Columbus with cacique not mentioned in, 164 n.; on naming of Mona, 164 n.; on intentions of Columbus regarding Carib Islands, 166 n.

Las Cuevas, monastery, cxlv, cxlvi.
Latin, spoken in lands alleged to have been discovered, xiii; basis of learning in period, lxxxi; Columbus' knowledge of, *ibid.* and lxxxvii.

Latins, lxxix.

Lebrija, Antonio de, Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca a pupil of, 84 n.

Leeward Islands, 40 n.

Lenox Collection (New York Public Library), cxxiv.

Leo X, Pope, liii.

Leon, xv, cxlvii, cxlviii; commander mayor de, 54 n.

Leon, Ponce de, *see* Ponce de Leon.

Leonzico, dog, 126 n.

Letter of Columbus, on the First Voyage, light thrown by, on ideas of Columbus in 1492, xlv, xeviii; assertion of value of discovery in, xlv; disappointment of Columbus revealed in, xlvi-xlvii; states that the Indies had been reached by Columbus, xcii, cxx; shows that Columbus thought that he might reach Catayo, cv-cvi; clarity of expression in, xevi-xevii; critical account of, cxxiii *et seq.*; original lost, xciii, cxxiii; extant versions of, cxxiii-cxxxi; versions in Spanish, cxxiii-cxxx; folio version, cxxiii-cxxiv; quarto version, cxxiv; fabrication of quarto version, *ibid.*; Simancas MS., cxxiv-cxxvi; Cuenca MS., cxxv-cxxvi; date of printing of folio version of, cxxiii, and of quarto version of, cxxiv; relation of the four Spanish versions to one another and to the original, cxxvi; 'Catalanisms' in, cxxvii; not originally written in Catalan, cxxvii-cxxix; place of printing of folio and quarto versions of, cxxvii, cxxix-

Letter of Columbus—continued.

cxix; material throwing light on, in Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, cxix; Italian versions of, cxix-cxxi; Ambrosian MS., cxix; Florence MS., cxix; second Florence MS., cxxi; metrical version of, cxxi; relationship of Italian versions to the original, cxxi; Latin translation of, cxxi, 2 n.; German translation of, cxxvii; relationship of, to letter sent to Ferdinand and Isabella, lxxiii, cxxii; no distinction between letter endorsed to *escribano de ración* and that endorsed to Sanchez, cxxii; date of composition of, cxxii-cxxv; postscript to, cxxv-cxxvi; date of dispatch of, cxxvi-cxxix; character of, cxxix-cxli; original probably not in autograph of Columbus, xcvii, cxlii-cxliii; text and translation of, 2-19.

'**Libro de las Profecías**', letter of Columbus prefixed to, xxxv n.; mysticism in, liii; Columbus assisted in compilation of, liii; theological knowledge in, lxxviii; purpose of, xc and n., xci.

'**Libro Manual**', Jacome el Rico described in, 48 n.

'**Libro-Registro**', text of *Capitulations* in, xcix, c, ci.

Libya, 120.

Liria, Nicolas de, lxviii and n.

Lisbon, lxxiv, lxxviii, cxxxi; residence of Columbus at, xxxvi n., xxxvii and n., 18 and n.; negotiations at, lxi.

Lollis, Cesare de, xix n., lxvi n., cxxii, cxxiv, cl and n.; on relationship between MS. versions of letter of Columbus, cxxvi; on 'Catalanisms' in letter, cxxx *et seq.*; on signature of memorial, on Española, cxlv; on date of memorial, cxxv, 106 n.; text of letter of Columbus printed by, cxliii; text of Chanca's letter printed by, cxlvi; notes of Columbus printed by, xxvii n.; criticism of Vignaud by, xvii n., xx; view of objective of Columbus, lxxv n.; dated notes of Columbus before 1492, xc and n.; authenticity of prologue suspected by, xcv and n.; *Scritti di Colombo* of, cxxiii n., cxxv n., cxxvii n., cxxx n., cxxxi

n., cxliii, cl and n.; on cypher of Columbus, cxlv, cxlvi.

Long Island, *see* **Fernandina**.

Los Palacios, cxlvii, cl.

Lugo, Alfonso de, cv, 2 n.

Lujan, Juan de, 114 n.

Luther, Martin, l.

Macaca (Cuba), province, reached, 128 and n.; reached a second time, 158 and n.

Macao, Point (Española), 41.

Madeira, lxxiv; residence of Columbus in, xxxvii and n., lxxviii, cix; molasses and sugar to be obtained from, 108.

Magellan, Ferdinand, 84 n.

Magón (Avan), province, 12 n., 136 and n.; beliefs of people of Ornofay concerning people of, 138 and n., 156.

Magua (Española), district, 42 n.

Maguana, San Juan de la, situation of, 66 n.

Maguana (Española), district, 42 n.

Maisonneuve, M., cxxiii and n.

Major, R. H., *Select Letters of Columbus* of, xiii n., cxxxi n., cxliii, cxlv, cxlvi.

Malaga, cxlix n., 54 n., 108 n.

Malay Peninsula, *see* **Golden Chersonese**.

Maldonado, Melchior, sent on mission to Pope, 54 n.; visited Guacanagari, 58 n.

Manchineel (Manganillo), tasted by Columbus' men, 24 and n.

Mandeville, John, Sir, xxv, cxx, cxlvii; on Catayo, 116 and n.; on islands in Indies, 130 and n.; on people of Moré, 138 and n.; on griffons, 144 n.

Mangles, Islas de, found, 140 and n.

Manrique, Garcia Fernandez, *see* **Fernandez Manrique**.

Mao, river, *see* **Oro**, rio del.

Margaret of Austria, 84 n.

Margarit, Bernardo, 96 n.

Margarit, Pedro, 'converso', not to be confused with mosen Pedro Margarit, 96 n.

Margarit (Margarite), mosen Pedro, instructed to capture Caonabo, 48 n.; recommendations regarding, 96; biography of, 96 n.; sum granted to, by Ferdinand and Isabella, 98, 110; left in charge of forces at Isabella, 114 n.

'**Marlagalante**', flagship on second voyage, 74 and n., 94 and n.

Maria Galante (Marie Galante), island, 14 n.; sighted, 22 and n.; reached, 24 and n.; no gold in, 38 n.

Marien (Bohio), district of Española, 42 n.

Mariguana, island, 2 n.

Marinus of Tyre, xxiii, lxvi and n., lxxx.

Markham, Clements R., xix n.

Marquez, Diego, of Seville, lost in Guadeloupe, 28 and n.

Marta (Española), probably Isola Bella, city of, 64 and n.

Martins, Fernán, canon, letter of Toscanelli to, lxxix, lxxxvii.

Martinique, *see* **Matinino**.

Martyr, Peter (Angleria), xxxii and n., civ and n., 10 n., 12 n., 14 n.; on second voyage, cxliii and n.; *Decades* of, cxliv; account of exploration of coasts of Cuba and Jamaica by, cxlvi and n., cxlix and n.; on native clothing, 6 n.; on destruction of La Navidad, 48 n.; on death of Caonabo, 48 n.; on fortifications of Spaniards, 50 n.; on fall of Malaga, 54 n.; on Guacanagari's bed, 56 n.; on supposed wounds of Guacanagari, 58 n.; on suggested arrest of, 58 n.; on escape of women taken from Caribs, 60 n.; on cooking of *iguana*, 70 n.; on expedition of Ginés de Gorbalan, 70 n.; on seeds taken by Columbus, 84 n.; on Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, 84 n.; on livestock taken on second voyage, 86 n.; on Pedro Margarit, 96 n.; on naming of Alfaeto, 114 n.; on Indian method of fishing, 134 n.; on incident of the old Indian, 154 n.

Massachusetts Historical Society, cl.

Matinino (Martinique), island, 16 and n.

Mayreni, Indian cacique, hostility of, to Spaniards, 48 and n., 50; may have been brother of Caonabo, 48 n.; said by Indians to have killed the Christians, 54.

Maysi, Cape, *see* **Alfaeto**.

Medinaceli, duke of, *see* **Cerda**, Luis de la.

Mediterranean Sea, theory of Columbus regarding route to Spain by, 118.

Mejorada, la, monastery, cxliv.

Mendez, Diego, on birthplace of Columbus, xxxii and n.

Mexico, cxvii, cxviii, 2 n.

Mina da Ouro, la, Columbus on position of, lxxx and n.; Columbus forbidden to go to, cii and n., cxiii.

Misas, rio de las, 156.

Mona, island, 40 n., 164 n.

Moñiz, Felipa, wife of Columbus, lxxvi and n.

Monte Christi, harbour, 42 and n.; reached, 46; site chosen near, 62 n.

Montego Bay (Jamaica), reached, 128 and n.; christened by Columbus Buen Tiempo, 158 and n.

Montserrat, sighted, 34 and n.; monastery of, entered by Fray Buil, 74 n.

Moors, li, lxxix, xciv; hated by Bernáldez, cxlvii and n.; Ginés de Gorbalan rewarded for services against, 70 n.; danger of land journey to Spain on account of, 118; rings worn by women of, 162 n.

Morant, Point, *see* **Farol**, Punta del.

Morant, Port, 158 n.

Muñoz, Juan Baptista, xix and n., cxliv.

Nansen, Fridtjoff, xiv n.

Narvaez, Rodrigo de, 108 n.

National Library (Florence), versions of letter of Columbus in, cxxx and n., cxxxi and n.

Navarrete, Martin Fernandez de, xiv n., xix and n., xlv n., lxxii n., c and n., ci n., cii n., cv n., cxxiv n., cxlvi and n., 12 n., 20 n.; printed letter of Chanca, cxxiv and n., cxxxi n., cxxxv and n., cxliii and n. *et seq.*

Navidad, La, 4 n.; Rodrigo de Escovedo left at, cxxviii; men left at, 12 and n., 14 and n., 82 n.; destruction of, 46-8 and n.; Columbus landed at, 50; searched, 52.

Nelba, river, 66 n., 82 n.

New World, xvi, xxviii, xc, xcii, c, cvi, cxxv; Jacome el Rico perhaps first Christian to die in, 48 n.; voyages of Ojeda to, 76 n.

Nicayagua, river, *see* **Oro**, Rio del. 'Niña', the, caravel, cxii, cxxxiii, cxxxiv, cxxxvi.

- Nitl**, gold mines said to be in, 66 and n.; gold found in, 70.
- Nombre de Dios**, discovered by Columbus, cxxiii.
- Norsemen**, in America, xiv; literature on, xiv n.
- Nunn**, George E., xxii n.
- Ocean Sea**, the, 120.
- Ochanca**, *see* Chanca.
- Ojeda**, Alonso de ('a sinner of a man'), distinguished from Alonso de Ojeda, 76 n.; raided Cumana, *ibid*.
- Ojeda** (Hojeda), Alonso de, expedition of, to Indies, xlviii; search party led by, 32 n.; captured Caonabo, 48 n.; Spaniards doubted accuracy of, 70 n.; account of, 76 n.; Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca patron of, 84 n.; relieved fort of St. Thomas, 96 n.
- Olmedo**, exliv.
- Organos, Cordilleras de los**, the, 136 n., 142 n.
- Oriente** (Cuba), 128 n.
- Ornofay** (Ornophay: Camaguey), province of Cuba, Columbus reached, 138 and n.; beliefs of people of, 138, 156; Columbus left, 140; reached a second time, 150; Columbus bade farewell to people of, 156.
- Oro**, rio del (Nicayagua, or Mao), 78 n. *See also* Yaqui, river.
- Ottomans**, *see* Turks, Ottoman.
- Ovando**, Nicolas de, town built by order of, 66 n.; sent to Española, 74 n.
- Oviedo y Valdes**, Gonzalo Fernandez de, exlv and n., 6 n., 12 n., 14 n.; on origin of Columbus, xxxv n.; disbelieved story of the pilot, xvii n.; on Indian marriage, 14 n.; described *tambixque*, 24 n.; described *manchineal*, 24 n.; on main divisions of Española, 42 n.; on eating of dogs by Spaniards, 42 n.; on fauna of Española, 42 n., 44 n.; on destruction of La Navidad, 48 n.; on Cayacoa, 50 n.; on fish of Española, 62 n.; on yams in, 64 n.; on native dyes, 66 n.; on San Juan de la Maguana, 66 n.; on *ceiba*, 68 n.; on *axi*, 68 n.; on Indian nuts, 70 n.; on reptiles and insects, 70 n.; on expedition of Ginés de Gorbelen, 70 n.; on conflict of Fray Buil with Columbus, 74 n.; on Pedro Margarit, 96 n.; on Cape Alfaeto, 114 n.; on animals in Cuba, 120 n.; on Leonzico, 126 n.; compared Cuba with Española, 130 n.; on Indian method of fishing, 134 n.; on tame herons of Indians, 136 n.
- Palencia**, bishop of, *see* Fonseca, Juan Rodriguez de.
- Palma**, subdued by Alfonso de Lugo, 2 n.
- Palos**, xciii, cxviii, cxxxvii.
- Pane**, Ramón, fray, 8 n.
- Paria**, xvi.
- Pavia**, university of, Columbus not educated at, lxxiii, lxxvi.
- Pedrarias** (Pedro Arias de Avila), 29 n.
- Pelicanus Aquilis**, seen, 40 and n.
- Peraza**, Inés, recognized suzerainty of Ferdinand and Isabella over Canaries, 2 n.; Beatriz de Bobadilla confused with, 20 n.
- Perestrello**, Bartholomeu Mofiz, reputed father-in-law of Columbus, lxxvi and n.
- Perez**, Juan, fray, guardian of La Rabida, 48 n.; called 'Rodrigo' in *Journal*, *ibid*.
- Perez**, Rodrigo, fray, *see* Perez, Juan, fray.
- Perez de Almazán**, *see* Almazán, Miguel Perez de.
- Perez de Luna**, Fernand, notary public, 120 n.
- Perraza**, Fernan, lord paramount of Gomera, 20 n.
- Perraza**, Guillem, son of Fernan Perraza, 20 n.
- Persia**, lv.
- Peschel**, O., 6 n.
- Petrus Aliacus**, *see* Ailly, Pierre d'.
- Pigafitta**, cxlix.
- Pilot**, story of the, xvii and n., xix, lxiv.
- Pinos**, Isla de (El Teroneso: San Juan Evangelista), found, 136 and n.; nature of sea between Cuba and, 140 n.; Columbus bound for, 150 and n.
- 'Pinta'**, the, cxxxiv, cxxxviii; repaired, at Canaries, cxii and n.
- Pinzón**, Martin Alonso, xl n., xlii, cxvii, 18 n.; debt of Columbus to, xvii, xli, lxiv; defended by Fernandez Duro, xix and n.; suspected by Columbus, xcvi, cxxxviii

- and n.; claimed to have visited 'Bebeque', 128 n.
- Pisa**, Bernal de, plotted against Columbus, 94 n.
- Pius II**, Pope, xc n., cxv n., 16 n.
- Pizarro y Orellana**, Fernando, on Ojeda, 76 n.
- Planck**, printer, cxxxi.
- Plata**, Puerto, 62 n.
- Pleitos de Colon**, xvii n.
- Pliny**, xxxvi n., lxviii n., 8 n.
- Polo**, Marco, travels of, xxiii, lxxxix; visit of, to Grand Khan, lxxi, lxxii; Columbus thought he had reached lands described by, xcii; described Catayo, ciii; placed numerous islands in the south, cxx; notes of Columbus on, 10 n.
- Ponce de Leon**, Rodrigo, marquis of Cadiz, cxlvii; death of, cxlviii; information received from, by Bernáldez, cxlix.
- Portland Bight**, 158 n.
- Portland Point** (probably Monte Cristallino), reached, 158 and n.
- Porto Rico**, *see* **Puerto Rico**.
- Porto Santo**, lxxvi, lxxviii.
- Portsmouth** (Dominica), probably harbour found by Columbus, 24 n.
- Portugal**, liv; Columbus in, lxi; alleged manner of arrival in, lxxvi; king of, lxii, cx; African coast the recognized preserve of, cxiii; arrangements between Castile and, cxiv; renounced claim to Canaries, 2 n.
- Portuguese**, the, lxxiv, 2 n.; discoveries of, xxi, xxv; search of, for route to eastern Asia, lxv; references to discoveries of, xc; attempt of, to anticipate Columbus, lvi; Columbus ordered to avoid, cii and n., instructed to ask for supplies from, cxiii; distrusted by Columbus, cxxxvi and n.; discovered Calicut, 118; route taken by, with goods of Calicut, 120.
- 'Portuguese'**, a type of caravel, 18 n.
- Prester John**, *see* **John**, Prester.
- Ptolemy**, geographer, xxiii, lxvi and n., lxviii and n., lxxx.
- Puerto Grande** (Bay of Guantánamo), named by Columbus, 120 and n.
- Puerto Real** (Bay of Caracol), 12 n.
- Puerto Rico** (Burenquen, Burenwuen), native names of, 38 n. *See also* **Burenquen**.
- Puigcerver**, F. Rivas, *see* **Rivas Puigcerver**, F.
- Pulgar**, Hernando del, cxxxii.
- Quarís**, island, *see* **Ceyre**.
- Quaritch**, Bernard, cxxiv and n.
- Quinsay**, lxxiv, cxii.
- Rabida**, la, monastery, association of Columbus with the fathers of, liv; fray Juan Perez, guardian of, 48 n.
- Rabihorcados**, *see* **Pelicanus Aquilis**.
- 'Raccolta Colombiana'**, xix n.
- Ramón**, fray, *see* **Pane**, Ramón.
- Ravenna**, monstrosity at, recorded by Bernáldez, cxlvii.
- Redonda**, Santa Maria la, sighted, 34 and n.
- Rendle**, Dr. A. B., Keeper of Botany at the Natural History Museum, on trees of Española, 68 n.
- René**, King, xxxvii and n.
- Rico**, Jacome el, Genoese, killed at La Navidad, 48 n.
- Riega**, Garcia de la, 2 n.
- Rivas Puigcerver**, F., 2 n.
- Rodriguez**, Beatriz, 84 n.
- Rodriguez Bermejo**, Juan, *see* **Triana**, Rodrigo de.
- Rodriguez de Fonseca**, *see* **Fonseca**, Juan Rodriguez de.
- Roldán**, Francisco, mission of Coronel to, 100 n.
- Rome**, sack of, xv.
- Roncière**, C. Bourel de la, lviii n.
- Roselly de Lorgues**, count, xviii and n.
- Ruge**, Sophus, xix n.
- Rum Cay**, *see* **Santa Maria de Concepción**.
- Russia** (Ruxia), 116 and n.
- St. Ann's Bay**, *see* **Santa Gloria**.
- St. Joan**, xlii.
- St. John**, the Divine, lxv.
- St. Rupert's Bay**, 24 n.
- St. Thomas**, fort of (Cibao), attacked by Caonabo, 48 n.; relieved by Ojeda, 96 n.; Pedro Margarit left in charge of, *ibid*.
- St. Vincent**, Cape, Columbus off, cxxxvi and n.; world contained between Alfaeto and, 120.
- Saleé**, la Rivière, 26 n.
- Salinas**, Punta de, 146 and n.
- Salsés**, defence of, lii.
- Saltés**, bar of, lxx, cxxxvii.

- Sanchez de Carvajal**, *see* Carvajal, Alonso Sanchez de.
- Sanchez**, Gabriel, treasurer of Aragon, cxxxii, cxxxix n., cxi and n.
- Sanchez**, Luis, brother of Gabriel Sanchez, cxi n.
- Sanchez**, Pedro, father of Gabriel Sanchez, cxln.
- Sanfelices**, Don Juan de, cxxv.
- 'San Juan'**, ship, 114 n.
- San Juan Baptista** (San Juan del Puerto Rico), *see* Puerto Rico and Burenquen.
- San Juan Evangelista**, *see* Pinos, Isla de.
- San Martin**, island, 34 n.
- San Miguel**, Cape (Española), 164 n.
- San Nicolas** (Española), harbour, Columbus reached, 114 and n.; Alfaeto within sight of, 114 n.
- San Salvador**, *see* Guanahani.
- 'Santa Clara Niña'**, ship, 114 n.
- Santa Cruz**, 38 and n.
- Santa Cruz**, Cabo de, 158 n.
- Santa Fé**, Capitulations of, *see* Capitulations of Santa Fé.
- Santa Gloria** (St. Ann's Bay), 126 and n.
- Santa Hermandad**, *see* Hermandad.
- 'Santa Maria'**, the, flagship of Columbus on his first voyage, cxvi, cxxii, 12 n., 48 n.
- Santa Maria**, in the Azores, 18 n.
- Santa Maria**, island, 142 n.; discovered, 134; probably Cayo Largo, 134 n.
- 'Santa Maria Galante'**, *see* 'Mariagalante'.
- Santa Maria de Concepción**, Isla de, second island discovered by Columbus, identified with Rum Cay, 2 and n.
- Santa Maria de la Antigua**, *see* Antigua, Santa Maria de la.
- Santa Maria la Redonda**, *see* Redonda, Santa Maria la.
- Santangel** (Chinillo), Luis de, cxxiv n., cxxxix and n., cxlii.
- Santa Ursula y las Once Mil Virgines**, islands christened by Columbus, 38 n.
- Santiago**, Order of, Pedro Margarit a knight of, 96 and n.
- Santiago de Cuba**, *see* Jamaica.
- Santo Domingo** (Española), xvii; 76 n.
- Savona**, alleged by Diego Mendez to be the birthplace of Columbus, xxxii; Columbus resident in, xxxvi.
- Savonarola**, liii.
- Scandinavia**, xiv.
- Seco**, rio, *see* Buenicún.
- Serafin**, Punta del (Punta Gorda), 144, 148; named by Columbus, 140 and n.
- Seres**, the, Indians compared with, 8 n.
- Serrano y Sanz**, Manuel, cxl n., 2 n.; on Pedro Margarit, 96 n.
- Seven Cities**, Island of the, xxiv.
- Seville**, 86, 106; Chanca's letter to city of, 20; Chanca a native of, 20 n.; visit of Isabella to, 76 n.; supplies drawn from, on second voyage, 84 n.; *lanzas* to be inspected at, 102 n.; Diego Columbus died at, 114 n.
- Sicily**, 84, 124.
- Sierra Maestra**, the, 124 n.
- Silber**, printer, cxxxi.
- Simancas**, Archives of, version of letter of Columbus in, cxxiv.
- Simon**, Indian, taken to Castile, 130 and n.
- Slave Trade**, Columbus suggested, 92; suggestion rejected by sovereigns, 92 n.
- Solomon**, cxviii, xci.
- Soria**, Juan de, opposed second voyage of Columbus, xlv n.; alleged bad faith of, 102 and n.
- Soufrière**, la, 26 n.
- South Sea Bubble**, lviii.
- Spain**, xxiv, xxxv n., xlvii, lxvi, lxxiv, lxxviii, xc, xci, cxiv; belief in sphericity of globe in, xxii; Columbus in, lxxvii n.; Columbus in contact with Italians in, xxxvi n.; belief in divine operation in, 1; Columbus' knowledge of Latin acquired in, lxxxi and n.; distance between Catayo and, cxii; objective of Columbus land between Catayo and, cxx; Caonabo sent to, 48 n.; fish of Española compared with those of, 62 and n.; vegetables, compared with those of, 64; wish of Columbus to be identified with, 74 n.; slaves sent to, 92 n.; Columbus decided to return to, 96 n.; Diego Columbus returned to, 114 n.; marvels of, described to Indians, 154.
- Spaniards**, sickness of, in Española,

- 66 n., 78 *et seq.*, 82; *iguana* enjoyed by, 70 n.; kept on short rations by Columbus, 74 n.; opposition of, to Columbus, 78 n., 80 n.; dogs employed to chase Indians by, 126 n.; caciques thought tyrannical by, 156 n.
- Spanish Peninsula**, *see* Spain.
- Streicher**, Fritz, on handwriting of Columbus, xxviii n., 16 n.; on sketch map by Columbus, 114 n.
- Succession**, War of, cxiii.
- Swine**, pedigree of, in Española, 86 n.
- Syllacio** (Seillacio), Nicolo, account of second voyage by, cxliii and n.; on destruction of La Navidad, 48 n.; on fertility of land round Isabella, 62 n.; on island of 'Isola Bella', 64 n.; on expedition of Ginés de Gorbalan, 70 n.
- Tacitus**, Cornelius, xxxv n., lxxvi.
- Tagus**, the, cxxxiii and n., cxxxvi and n.
- Tambirique**, 24 and n.
- Tarragona**, 74 n.
- Tartars**, 116.
- Tartary**, Grand, 116.
- Teneriffe**, acquired for Castile, 2 n.; Española compared with, 4 and n.
- Teroneso**, el, *see* Pinos, Isla de.
- Terra Australis**, view of Columbus on, cxx-cxxi.
- Thacher**, John Boyd, lxxxiv n., lxxxix n., cxxiv n., cxxxi n., cxxxiii n., cxli n.; on date of letter of Columbus to Diego, 74 n.
- Theodosius**, the Great, Emperor, edict of, l.
- Tierra Firme**, cii, cvi, cxx, 148; demand of Columbus to be viceroy and governor of, ci *et seq.*; Antilla not, cv and n., cxix; 'Tierra Australis' could be regarded as, cxx-cxxi; ships required for discovery of, 94; Columbus suspected that Juana was, 118, 128; Alfaeto extreme point of, 120; Columbus questioned Indians regarding, 118, 130. *See also* Cuba.
- Torquemada**, Juan de, grand inquisitor, lii, liv.
- Torre**, Juana de la, nurse of Prince Juan, 74 n.
- Torres**, Antonio de, cxlv; Ginés de Isabella by, 74 and n.; drowned, 74 n.; account of, *ibid.*; forwarded documents to Ferdinand and Isabella, 112 n.
- Torres**, Luis de, 4 n.
- Toscanelli**, Pablo, lxxviii, cxii; story of correspondence of, with Columbus, alleged to be a fabrication, xvii; authenticity of letter of, denied, xxx; Columbus' project approved of by, lxxiv; opinion of, on learning of Columbus, lxxix-lxxx, lxxxvii; Giraldi medium of communication between Columbus and, lxxxvi; not referred to by Columbus, lxxxviii; objective of Columbus, according to, lxxxix.
- Trees**, in Española, products of, 68 and n.
- Triana**, Rodrigo de, 2 n.
- Trinidad**, island, first land sighted, cviii.
- Trinity**, the, devotion of Columbus to, lii and n., cviii.
- Trotti**, cxxxviii and n.
- Tunis**, xxxvii n.
- Turey**, Indian name for Heaven, 66.
- Turks**, Ottoman, opposition of Ferdinand and Isabella to, civ; Chios taken by, 16 n.
- Turuqueira**, 30 n.
- Uhagon**, Francisco R. de, xxxii n.
- Ulloa**, Luis, cxxvii n., 2 n., 4 n.; argues that Columbus was the pilot, xvii n.; on attempt of Columbus to perpetuate his own name, 38 n.; suggestion of, regarding Fray Buil, 74 n., and Margarit, 96 n.; on age of Diego Columbus, 114 n.; on Catalan origin of Columbus, 148 n.
- Usuf**, Alazar, cxl n.
- Valencia**, cxxv, 126.
- Varnhagen**, Francesco Adolfo de, Visconte de Porto Seguro (pseudonym Genaro H. de Volafan), on letter of Columbus, cxxv and n. *et seq.*, cxxviii and n., cxxxii and n., cxxxix, cxl and n.
- Vega**, Garcilasso de la, Inca, xvii n.
- Vega**, the, 78 n.
- Vega Real** (district of Española), Xamana part of, 42 n.

Vignaud, Henri, story of pilot accepted by, xvii n.; *Toscanelli and Columbus* of, xvii n.; effect of work of, xx and n.; on sphericity of globe, xxij n.; denied authenticity of Toscanelli's correspondence, lxxxvi; on negotiations of Columbus with Ferdinand and Isabella, lv; theory of, on objective of Columbus, xciii, cv; evidence collected by, cvi; on title of Grand Khan, lxxi n.; classical view of Columbus' project not accepted by, lxxv.

Villa de Navidad, *see* **Navidad, La.**

Villacorta, Pedro de, 74 and n., 110 and n.

Villalva, veedor of the Hermandad at Seville, 102 n.

Volafan, Genaro H. de, *see* **Varnhagen.**

Vulgate, the, use made of by Columbus, lxviii, lxxxv, xci.

Watling Island, *see* **Guanahani.**

Westphalia, John of, printer,

printed the tracts of Pierre d'Ailly, lxxxix and n.

Winsor, Justin, xix n.

Xamana (Española), 42 and n., 44.

Xaragua (possibly district of Española), 42 n.; possibly identical with Zuruquia, 44 n.

Xerez, Rodrigo de, 4 n.

Yallah Point, *see* **Farol**, Punta del.

Yaqui (Rio del Oro), river, 46 n., 66 n., 78 n., 82 and n.

Ysabela, *see* **Isabella.**

Zafra, Ferdinand de, instructed to find *lanzas*, 102 n.

Zapata, peninsula, reached, 140 and n.

Zaragoza, cxxxix n., cxl n., 96 n.

Zedo, Firmin, 94 n.

Zuruquia (Española), ducks in, 44; possibly identical with Xaragua, 44 n.

